BENNETT, COLEMAN & CO. LTD. | Estd. 1838 | VOL. 43 NO.99 BENGALURU | MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2026 | METRO | PAGES 32 | PRICE ₹5**

THE TIMES OF INDIA

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Sai Sudharsan continues his fine form with 87 runs off 46 balls as Gujarat Titans strolled to an eight-wicket win over Chennai Super Kings. In another IPL game, Rinku Singh (83 not out) stars in Kolkata's Super Over win against Lucknow

Pawan Khera moves SC against an order of HC which rejected his anticipatory bail petition in connection with his allegations that Assam CM's wife possessed multiple passports & undisclosed properties abroad

India's peak power demand hits an all-time high of 256 gigawatts on Saturday due to an intensifying heat wave, which increased the use of cooling devices. Power ministry says peak demand may reach 271GW this yr

President **Volodymyr Zelensky accuses Russia of "nuclear terrorism"**, as Ukraine marks 40th anniversary of Chernobyl nuclear disaster amid deadly fresh overnight drone attacks in which five people were killed

Kodagu teacher kills herself over stress, Census

A 51-year-old schoolteacher allegedly shot herself to death at Cherambane, near Madikeri in Kodagu district, Sunday morning. Police said Rohini, who worked at Cherambane Govt Higher Primary School, allegedly used a single-barrel gun kept at her house. Preliminary reports suggest she was under stress due to work and Census enumeration, besides unspecified personal issues.

98% of LPG refill bookings now being done online

About 98% of LPG refill bookings are now taking place digitally, while 94% of deliveries are based on a delivery authentication code to maintain transparency and prevent diversion of cooking gas, govt said. Officials said OMCs were continuing to prioritise LPG supply to households, delivering over 50 lakh cylinders a day despite the squeeze on supplies. **P 6**

Woman gives birth on train, rly staff & passenger help

A pregnant woman, who went into labour, delivered a baby on board a train while travelling from Murudeshwar to Bengaluru on Sunday evening. She was found in a critical condition. Railway staff alerted medical services. Before the ambulance could arrive, she delivered a baby with the assistance of a fellow female passenger. Both the mother and the newborn were shifted to a hospital. TNN

Harassment claim: Rowing official shunted

Sports Authority of India suspended P T Paulose, an Asian Games bronze medallist and India's first Olympic rower, who served as the 'high performance director' at National Centre of Excellence in Alappuzha, and transferred him to Imphal after a female assistant coach accused him of sexual harassment. **P 13**

Rain relief likely for Bengaluru in 2 days

Reeling under intense heat for weeks, Bengaluru may get respite, with light to moderate showers likely after two days, according to IMD. The city recorded a maximum temperature of 36°C on Sunday, while the minimum stood at 23.1°C. **P 2**

Debt-ridden farmer couple found dead

An elderly couple from UP's Mainpuri was found unconscious in the field Saturday after allegedly consuming poison and died in hospital later. Villagers said the two were under financial stress due to crop losses. **P 6**

Gunman tries to storm Trump's media dinner

Overpowered After Firing 2 Shots, Prez Safe

Chidanand Rajghatta & Agencies

Washington: US President Trump was hurriedly evacuated from a White House Correspondents' Assn (WHCA) dinner at the Washington Hilton hotel on Saturday night after shots rang out beyond the banquet hall shortly before he was to deliver his speech.

US Secret Service said soon after that it was investigating a shooting incident near the main magnetometer screening area of the hotel, the same one where John Hinkley Jr tried to assassinate ex-President Ronald Reagan in 1981. It also said a suspect was in custody.

While some eyewitness reports said one suspect was shot in the melee, the Secret Service said "condition of those involved is not yet known, and law enforcement is actively assessing the situation".

FULL COVERAGE: P 10, 12

US acting attorney general Todd Blanche said the suspect fired "a couple of shots" before being subdued by security personnel immediately after breaching the outer security circle. "From what we know from video surveillance and witnesses, (he) barely got past the perimeter," Blanche told CNN.

The Secret Service said the President and First Lady Melania Trump were safe, as were all other protectees, including V-P J D Vance and cabinet members attending the event.

The WHCA dinner is an annual roast and toast, which Trump has avoided from the time he became president, ostensibly because he believes most of the media is hostile to him. He made an exception this year, and instead of a well-known comedian or late-night host who typically roasts the gathering, he was to deliver the keynote himself, with a "mentalist" providing entertainment for the evening.

Half an hour into the evening when dinner was about to be served, there were several popping sounds outside the hall while Trump and the First Lady were seated on stage.

▶Wanted show to go on, P 12

GRAD FROM TOP ENGG INSTITUTE

Photos: Reuters

Secret Service agents rushed to escort Trump (left), Melania and cabinet members off the stage while guests took cover in the ballroom

- **8.35pm (local time),** man with **shotgun, handgun and knives,** ran past checkpoint in lobby of Washington Hilton hotel where annual **White House Correspondents' Assn dinner was being held**
- Gunfire exchanged and suspect, **Cole Tomas Allen (31)** from California, brought down by Secret Service members
- Allen has a bachelor's degree in engg from Caltech, a master's in comp science from California State University. **Anti-Trump, anti-Christian rhetoric found on his social media accounts**
- Later, Trump addressed media, made **case for secure ballroom at White House**
- **3rd time since 2024** Trump has come under threat. Earlier bids at poll rally (Pennsylvania, July 2024) and at his golf club (Florida, Sept 2025). **15th scare involving Trump since 2016**

> **I've studied assassinations, and I must tell you the most impactful people...take a look at Abraham Lincoln... they're the ones that they (assassins) go after. They don't go after the ones that don't do much — President Trump**

Araghchi in Pak; can talk on phone: Trump

Trump said Iran can reach out to the US if it wants to negotiate, even as Iran's foreign minister Abbas Araghchi reached Islamabad Sunday. "If they want to talk... they can call us. You know, there is a telephone," Trump said, a day after cancelling a trip by envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner to Pakistan. **P 12**

PM: Relieved Trump, VP & others are safe

Condemning the shooting, PM Narendra Modi posted on X, "Relieved to learn that President Trump, First Lady and Vice President are safe and unharmed... I extend my best wishes for their continued safety and well-being. Violence has no place in a democracy and must be unequivocally condemned." TNN

3 killed in b'day cake-smearing row at UP gym

Meerut: The birthday party of Jitendra Kumar, a private contractor based in Bulandshahr, turned deadly when some guests smeared cake on Kumar's face against his wish, and he allegedly opened fire, killing three members of the same family. Kumar fled his party after the firing and is currently on the run, **reports Rahul Singh.**

The triple murder took place inside a gym in the district's Khurja area on Saturday night, where Kumar's friends had turned up to celebrate. A few others who frequented the gym were also invited. Among those present were the local councillor's cousin Amardeep Saini (32), brother Manish Saini (30), and nephew Akash Saini (19).

▶ CCTV evidence, P 8

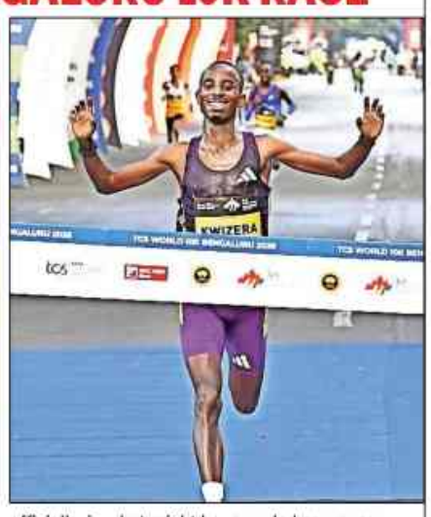
'I've faith in party': DKS on CM's post

Clocking nearly three years as deputy CM, DK Shivakumar Sunday said he continued to repose faith that the party would take an appropriate decision on the chief ministership issue. The statement comes after a 2-day visit to Delhi. He said he wouldn't speak "any further on the matter in the media".

Amid power tussle, senior minister Satish Jarkiholi is positioning himself as an internal troubleshooter in a bid to emerge as a key face of Ahinda (minorities, backward classes & Dalits) bloc and a potential contender for the CM's job in a post-Siddaramaiah phase. **P 4**

SAWE BREAKS 2-HR MARATHON BARRIER; KWIZERA WINS BENGALURU 10K RACE

Getty Images & Chethan Shivakumar



The fabled 2-hour barrier for a marathon has been broken, officially, in what might be regarded as a once-inconceivable feat marking the peak of human physical achievement. Not by one runner, but two. **Sabastian Sawe of Kenya retained his title in the London Marathon, completing it in 1 hour, 59 minutes and 30 seconds** on Sunday and shattering the previous men's world record by an astonishing 65 seconds. Just 11 seconds behind was Ethiopia's Yomif Kejelcha, who — running in his first-ever marathon — also covered the 26.2-mile (42.2-km) course in under 2 hours. (Right) **Burundi's Rodrigue Kwizera**, a silver medallist in 2023, **set an event record of 27:31** en route to victory in the elite men's category at the TCS World 10K Bengaluru on Sunday | P 2 & 14

Zurich flight aborts take-off in Delhi after engine fire; 5 injured

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Five persons on board a SWISS Delhi-Zurich flight on Sunday morning were injured during evacuation on a runway at the IGI airport while using emergency slides when the aircraft had to abandon takeoff following an engine fire.

Of the five, four passengers were admitted to Medanta Hospital in Gurgaon while a cabin crew member suffered a sprained ankle.

The failure of engine number one and subsequent fire breakout in it happened when the SWISS Airbus A330 was operating as LX 147 with 232 passengers (including four infants) and 13 crew members. Being such a big and potentially dangerous incident, India's Aircraft Accident Investigation Board will investigate the case, said senior officials.

On the take-off roll at 1.08am, when the aircraft had reached a speed of 104 knots (about 193 kmph), the engine failure happened. The pilots abandoned take-off. After coming to a halt, they decided to carry out evacuation on the runway (28/10). Delhi airport said on X that it declared a "full emergency". "All prescribed safety protocols were promptly executed and passengers were safely evacuated. Airport operations remained unaffected," it added.

In a statement, SWISS said: "Shortly after 1am local time Sunday, an issue occurred with one of the engines during the take-off of flight LX147 in Delhi. The crew aborted take-off and, after assessing the situation, decided as a precaution to evacuate the aircraft. SWISS has established a task force."

"Four passengers (are) in hospital. Our staff are (with them) and closely supporting them for as long as the situation requires," it added.

▶ Crew member injured, P 8

India tightens grip on foreign airlines

DGCA can now "revoke or suspend" a foreign airline's authorisation to operate to India for lapses like not meeting safety standards. In one of his first orders after taking over as DGCA chief, Vir Vikram Yadav said foreign airlines "shall nominate or appoint a local representative to represent it before DGCA for all its matters". **P 8**

TDP supporters disrupt comedy show in city over past Naidu jokes

Vijayawada: A stand-up show by Hyderabad-based comedian Sarat Uday in Bengaluru was disrupted on Saturday by alleged TDP supporters, who confronted and screamed abuse at the artiste over jokes he had made about Andhra Pradesh CM and party chief **N Chandrababu Naidu** nearly two years ago. Footage of the disruption went viral on Sunday, **reports Samdani MN.**

Uday alleged that shortly after he started his performance, a man from the audience approached him, claiming to be a fan, but objected to his past remarks about Naidu. Soon, a few others joined in, escalating the situation into a confrontation. Despite having issued an apology earlier for the jokes, Uday was pressured by the group to apologise again on stage. The situation intensified as more people joined, allegedly threatening the comedian.

▶ Protest condemned, P 11

Govt OKs jail dept's plan to appoint 550 former servicemen as guards

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Bengaluru: In the wake of multiple security lapses, including a terror suspect using a mobile phone and videos of inmates partying inside Bengaluru central prison, the govt has approved a prison department proposal to appoint 550 former military personnel as security guards at an annual cost of Rs 20 crore.

Alok Kumar, director general of police (prisons), has written to the director of the State Ex-Servicemen Welfare Society to initiate the recruitment process. Officials said it will be a temporary arrangement until the govt fills over 1,200 vacant jail warden posts.

Ex-servicemen will be deployed to strengthen surveillance, discipline, and overall prison management and correctional institutions.

Applicants must be below 45 years of age, capable of completing a 3km run within 20 minutes, meet physical fitness standards, and have no criminal background.

STOP-GAP MOVE

- Govt approves jail dept's plan to appoint **550 ex-military personnel as security guards**
- State officials say this is a temporary move until govt fills **1.2k vacant jail warden posts**
- Of the 550 ex-servicemen, **455 will be deployed in seven central jails,** including **250 at Bengaluru Central Prison**
- Remaining **95 guards will be posted in eight district prisons** across the state

Investigations into repeated cases of illegal smuggling of mobile phones, ganja and other contraband into prisons revealed that some people were throwing them into jail premises from outside the compound walls, especially in areas where there were fewer or no guards. It is said ex-servicemen will be deployed at such vulnerable points.

Kumar told **TOI** that the former defence personnel will be trained for their new responsibilities.

▶455 at central jails, P 4

Punjab withdraws security for five defected MPs, Centre steps in

Chandigarh: AAP govt in Punjab has withdrawn the security cover of five Rajya Sabha MPs from the state who recently joined BJP, ordering state police personnel to pull back from their New Delhi residences, **reports Navjeevan Gopal.**

Soon after the move, the BJP-led govt at the Centre stepped in to provide the MPs—cricketer-turned-politician Harbhajan Singh, Vikramjit Singh Sahney, Ashok Mittal, Rajinder Gupta and Sandeep Pathak — with CRPF protection.

One of the MPs told TOI that while his Punjab Police detail of four personnel was removed, the Centre almost immediately replaced them with a larger contingent of 15 CRPF personnel. A Punjab official said they have asked their personnel to come back, handing over the security to Delhi Police. Police in Punjab have been instructed to provide security to the MPs only on a need basis or for specific local programmes, he added.

▶ Coincides with protest, P 11

Army raises 16th Bhairav Battalion at B'gavi, focus on ops in difficult terrain

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Indian Army has raised 16th Bhairav Battalion of the Maratha Light Infantry (Maratha LI) at the Maratha Light Infantry Regimental Centre (MLIRC) in Belagavi, Karnataka, adding a new specialised infantry unit focused on mobility and operations in difficult terrain.

According to a defence ministry statement, the Bhairav Battalion has been designed for "high-mobility missions, adaptive manoeuvres and precise strikes", particularly in mountainous terrain and in counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism environments.

The raising ceremony was held at the regimental centre, where Commandant Brig Joydip Mukherjee presented the battalion flag to the Officer Commanding Bhairav Battalion, on Saturday.

Govt said the unit comprises specially selected personnel trained for demanding missions

The ministry said the battalion draws from the traditions of Maratha Light Infantry and has been raised to strengthen operational preparedness amid evolving security challenges. It added the unit comprises specially selected personnel trained for demanding missions.

▶ Light infantry relevant, P 4

K'taka to soon implement new minimum wage for workers: Lad

Sandur (Ballari): Karnataka labour minister Santosh S Lad Sunday said efforts will be made to implement a new minimum wage in the state in the coming days, in line with Supreme Court guidelines that factor in workers' needs for food, clothing and housing.

The minimum monthly wage averages about Rs 19,000. Lad said the state govt is committed to the welfare of unorganised sector workers and is bringing them into the mainstream through initiatives such as Ambedkar Sahaya Hasta programme. He noted Karnataka is the first state to introduce a Gig Workers Bill to safeguard the interests of delivery personnel working with online platforms.

He added that the govt will soon distribute smart cards for the welfare of drivers and cleaners. TNN

▶ New law on cards, P 4

Photojournalist Raghu Rai, whose lens captured India's soul, passes away at 83

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New Delhi: Renowned photojournalist Raghu Rai, whose camera captured every shade of India's chaotic yet riveting journey as a nation with empathy and nuance for over five decades, and who became a lodestar to a generation of photographers both home and abroad, passed away at a hospital on Sunday. He was 83.

"He had been suffering from cancer. But his condition worsened in the past couple of weeks," his assistant Amit Chauhan said.

Sometimes a solitary frame by Rai could speak more than 10,000 words. His stark black and white photograph, "Burial of a Child," became one of the most haunting images of the 1984 Bhopal Gas tragedy. His work during the 1971 Indo-Pak war and the consequent refugee crisis was published, among others, by the New York Times and Le Monde, and became the lens through which many in the West saw the conflict. His 1969 snapshot of a bunch of Congress politicians, all men, standing around a table while Indira Gandhi, the only woman in the frame, is seated, was an eloquent commentary on how power can trump gender.

Raghu Rai's (left) camera captured India's chaotic yet riveting journey as a nation for more than five decades. Whether it was the Bhopal gas tragedy, Indira Gandhi's power play, or the common man's daily hustle (right), Rai's iconic frames told stories with nuance and empathy

Rai's frames also recorded the song of struggling India. Washermen, wrestlers, construction workers, cart pullers – Rai didn't just see them; he heard them and created space for them. A 1985 photo, where a mother is relaying her younger child to his elder brother through a window with the Taj in the background, privileges the ordinary living people over the visually extraordinary. It's not just a frame, but an entire way of looking.

Another photo, a cart loaded with cartons being pushed by a woman and pulled by her husband on the streets of 1976 Delhi, stayed indelibly with filmmaker Satyajit Ray, Rai recounted in one of his books.

▶Human moment, P 6

Row over min's son wedding in tiger reserve

Dehradun/Haridwar: A controversy erupted after preparations for wedding of Uttarakhand cabinet minister Khajan Das's son were carried out inside the core zone of Rajaji Tiger Reserve at Sureshwari Devi temple, allegedly without formal permission from forest authorities. The row has raised concerns over "violations of forest & wildlife norms", **report Shivani Azad & MS Nawaz.**

On Saturday, materials for a "large setup" — a pandal, stage, coolers and generators — were taken into the reserve area, raising red flags, given that the area is an ecologically sensitive zone that houses elephants, tigers and leopards, among other animals and bird species.

▶ No nod was given, P 8

Isro to induct civilian astronauts for first time; 4 in second batch

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Bengaluru: India's astronaut cadre is expected to open to civilians for the first time, marking a shift in how Isro is preparing for the future of human spaceflight beyond the first few Gaganyaan missions.

Isro's committee on astronaut selection and management, after deliberation, has recommended that the second batch of Indian astronauts include four civilian specialists from STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) backgrounds alongside six mission pilots from military aviation background.

The first batch of four astronauts, all Indian Air Force (IAF) test pilots, was selected when the focus was squarely on flying the country's first crewed missions safely.

"While those from the first batch — Air Commodore Prashanth B Nair, Gp Capt Shubhanshu Shukla, Gp Capt Ajit Krishnan, Gp Capt Angad Prathap — were all fighter plane pilots turned test pilots, the second batch is expected to also include combat helicopter pilots from IAF," a source told TOI. The move to include civilians signals that Isro is beginning to look past proving the basic technologies for human spaceflight and towards building a sustained astronaut cadre for regular missions, scientific work in orbit and, eventually, India's planned space station.

▶Growing mission tempo, P 8

WILL FLY ONLY FROM 4TH MISSION

Selected civilians from STEM backgrounds

- **10** astronauts recommended in second batch
- **6** mission pilots (test pilots)
- **4** civilian specialists from STEM backgrounds

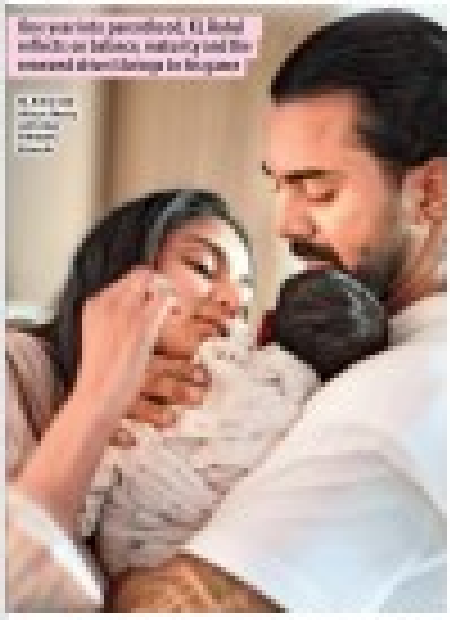
Long-Term Astronaut Cadre Plan

- **40 astronauts:** Total recommended cadre strength. Civilian specialists to join crews only from 4th mission
- **72 months:** 2nd batch readiness
- **96 months:** 3rd batch readiness
- 3rd batch will have 12 astronauts (10 civilians) & 2nd batch 10. Total projected requirement: 26 astronauts

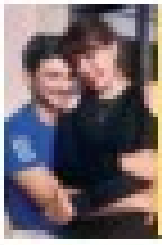
Bangalore Times

Every day is a fight to stay relevant: Sanjjanna Ggalrani

Being a father has added more purpose to what I do: KL Rahul



Alleging abuse, Michael Jackson's 'second family' files major lawsuit



Buzzstop

BHIA CHAKRABORTY GETS RELIEF AS COURT UNFREEZES BANK ACCOUNTS IN ED CASE

'Shut down your brain and shoot from the heart'

RACHU RAI
1987-2026

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Education TIMES

THE PATH TO EXCELLENCE

IIM UG courses bridge skills gap with industry-aligned specialisations

The push for flexible learning has led the premier institutes to introduce specialisations at the foundational level

CBSE 2nd edition exam emerges as a performance booster, not just a fallback option

Not psychiatrists, community-level care the way to go: New Nimhans chief

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Bengaluru: When Dr Prabha S Chandra took over as director of National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (Nimhans) a few weeks ago, she stepped into a system grappling with imbalance: a rapidly rising burden of mental health patients and an overstretched care infrastructure. In a conversation with **TOI**, Dr Chandra spoke of the urgent need to bridge this gap — through a tiered, community-driven model of care. She also drew attention to the growing mental health issues among the young. Excerpts:

Is the availability of mental health resources keeping up with the help we need?

Reliable, trained resources are still limited. Institutions like Nimhans cannot handle everything and are meant to deal with more difficult and complex cases. The number of psychiatrists is increasing with more medical colleges starting programmes, but the quality and training are still not adequate. There is limited clinical, hands-on exposure, and the quality varies widely across institutions.

What is Nimhans doing to bridge this gap?

Some key steps are being taken. One is strengthening district mental health programmes. Another is transitioning to a more clinically focused master's programme (M Clin Psy) under National Education Policy. Importantly, there is the Nimhans Digital Academy, where teachers, counsellors and community workers are trained through online methods. The idea is that not everyone needs intensive therapy — many problems of living, such as exam stress or relationship issues, can be managed with basic counselling, support and hand-holding. So, a tiered approach is being developed: community-level support for milder issues, trained professionals for moderate concerns, and specialised institutions for severe cases.

A SYSTEM UNDER SEVERE STRAIN

Dr Prabha S Chandra says mental health demand is rising while trained resources and infrastructure remain inadequate, with uneven quality of professionals. Youth mental health issues — especially anxiety driven by academic pressure and social changes — are growing. Nimhans, as per its new director, is bridging gaps via district programmes, digital training, and a tiered care model, while expanding infrastructure like a new neurotrauma centre and staffing.

As a national referral centre, Nimhans is overburdened. What steps are being taken to develop infrastructure?

A new neurotrauma centre is being planned in north Bengaluru, with govt approval already in place. It will be not limited to neurotrauma but equipped to handle multiple injuries such as head, limb and abdominal trauma. Given the lack of dedicated trauma centres in India — apart from AIIMS Delhi — this facility is expected to significantly strengthen trauma care in Karnataka.

At the same time, there are plans to increase ventilator capacity, with clear recognition that equipment alone is not enough. Each ventilator requires trained personnel, including critical care specialists and nurses, with roughly three nurses needed per patient. So, the focus is also on strengthening human resources.

What are the emerging mental health challenges, especially among youths?

Anxiety is a major concern, driven by safety issues, climate and geopolitical factors, and intense academic pressure. At the same time, play and sports — which help manage mental health — are reduced. With fewer buffers in society and limited opportunities for free play, children are not developing the skills needed to regulate their emotions. As a result, stress levels are high. This distress often manifests as anxiety, social avoidance and difficulty regulating emotions. Social media adds to the problem. At the same time, social circles are shrinking, and interactions are increasingly happening in closed spaces or through phones.

Given these challenges, what are the collaborative projects Nimhans is undertaking with state & Centre?

There is extensive research underway in suicide prevention. For example, in Ramanagara, suicide attempts are being tracked through a registry, with regular phone follow-ups to prevent repeat attempts — an approach that is already showing positive results.

Cohort studies on pregnancy and early childhood have also shown that the home environment in the first three years significantly influences later emotional and physical development. Based on this, there is close collaboration with the Govt of Karnataka to refine crèche policy and strengthen early childhood care systems.

At the national level, efforts are ongoing with the Govt of India to develop Nimhans 2.0. In parallel, research is exploring technologies, including robotics, brain tumours, and post-stroke rehabilitation.

Toxic trail on B'luru's edge as locals allege waste burning

File Complaints Flagging Recent Spike In AQI

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Pics: TOI

SMOKE SIEGE: According to residents of Kambipura, routine nighttime waste burning has led to pollution, with dangerous PM2.5 spikes and toxic smoke affecting quality of life

Bengaluru: In Kambipura, on the city's southwestern edge near Kumbalgodu, residents say mornings often begin not with fresh air but with the smell of burning waste and thick black smoke drifting into homes.

What was once seen as a quieter, greener fringe of the city is now, according to residents, facing chronic pollution. Complaints have now reached the Central Pollution Control Board and Karnataka State Pollution Control Board, with citizens submitting a petition on April 21 backed by air quality data which, they say, shows repeated spikes in particulate pollution.

According to residents, Air Quality Index monitors installed in the neighbourhood have recorded sharp surges in PM2.5 levels (over 175 µg/m³), particularly during late-night hours. The worst, they said, was the AQI of 488 on April 23 around 1am.

Many claim the smoke intensifies between 1am and 3am, waking families to ash-laden air and forcing some to shut windows, use air purifiers and rely on inhalers. Gunjan Zutshi, a resident of GoodEarth Malhar, said the issue has persisted for years despite repeated complaints. "I have been living here for the past four years, but the situation has remained the same. The panchayat says garbage collection exists, but it is not sufficient," she said.

Residents say the problem is not limited to stray waste burning but may involve industrial activity as well. Amrit Pandurangi, who has lived in the area for seven years, alleged some factories sort recyclable waste and burn the remainder, including rubber and plastic. "Earlier, this used to happen once a week, but now it is happening every day," he said, adding that residents installed AQI monitors around eight months ago to document the problem.

Anand Chakravarthi, president of the GoodEarth Patterns Owners Association, said residents have spent six years filing representations and staging protests seeking action. "We have now submitted a petition to the pollution control board and are hoping for a more effective response," he said.

Kumbalgodu panchayat officials, however, denied there was a garbage burning problem in the area. A senior official said the panchayat currently has two garbage collection trucks serving the entire jurisdiction and two more vehicles would be added soon after govt approval.

Not just in one locality

But Kambipura is not the only neighbourhood raising alarm. Residents of Rampura, near Bidarahalli in east Bengaluru, have also alleged prolonged exposure to smoke from waste burning at a nearby plastic shredding unit. People living in the area claim non-recyclable waste, including thermocol and medical refuse, is routinely burnt.

A resident of Prestige Augusta Golf Village said the issue has persisted for over five years. "Thick black smoke enters our homes at night, making it hard to breathe, and many children have developed asthma," the resident alleged, adding that people had earlier petitioned authorities but backed off after threats. The resident also recounted a recent fire that allegedly spread after routine burning escalated.

The complaints from Kambipura and Rampura point to a broader concern in Bengaluru's expanding outskirts, where rapid growth has outpaced civic systems and residents say environmental oversight remains weak.

Postcards, Preamble & Lots Of Playtime

Pics: Muthu P

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Residents of Nandini Layout woke up to a vibrant morning of activity as Happy Streets made its debut in the locality Sunday.

A meditation session by Heartfulness, followed by yoga and pranayama conducted by Sarvebhavanthu Sukhinah Yoga, marked the start of the programme on III Cross, near Oxford Secondary School. Subsequently, Swingers Dance Inc engaged the participants in a high-energy Zumba and fitness dance session.

Meanwhile, visitors got their retro-styled photographs clicked at the Bhima Jewellers stall. Bhima also hosted a crowd quiz with gifts and a lucky draw. Special folk performances like Dollu Kunita enthralled kids and adults alike, with some participants posing for photographs with the artistes in their vibrant attire.

BHIMA presents HAPPY streets — OUR ROADS, OUR WAY.

Children, in particular, found both fun and learning at the Reclaim Constitution stall, where they received printed copies of the Preamble. The Postcrossing Society of India revived interest in postcard writing by showcasing a variety of postcards and engaging young participants.

An art corner by NS Kumbar Art Academy attracted budding artists and introduced them to the Chitrakar International Art Competition. Prashree Art offered a Mandala Art experience, while NeeRav Arts demonstrated the use of Mudgar — an Indian heritage fitness tool.

Musical and creative performances by Mic & Melody and World Music Conservatory, and dance performances by Jagan Jagz's Dance Studio, Delight Cultural Dance Academy, and Firoz Dance and Fitness Studio kept the festive spirit alive through the morning.

Residents of Nagarabhavi and Nandini Layout said they had a great morning, enjoying games, music, yoga and more with friends and family. Many called it a fun reason to start early on a Sunday and expressed hope the event would be held across more neighbourhoods.

Happy Streets by The Times of India is presented by Bhima Jewellers, with multiple community partners contributing to the initiative.

VIBRANT MORNING: Happy Streets debuted in Nandini Layout with yoga, dance, art, and folk performances, drawing residents for a lively, community-driven start to Sunday

B'luru may get rain break, but humid heat set to linger

SUMMER SIZZLE CONTINUES

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: After days of intense summer heat, the city may get some respite, with light to moderate showers likely after two days, according to India Meteorological Department (IMD).

The city recorded a maximum temperature of 36°C Sunday, while the minimum stood at 23.1°C. According to the forecast, the city is expected to see mainly clear skies turning partly cloudy by afternoon, with chances of light showers over the next couple of days. Daytime temperatures are likely to remain around 36°C, while minimum temperatures may hover near 23°C. Heat conditions, however, are expected to persist for now.

IMD FORECAST

Elsewhere in Karnataka, weather conditions are set to vary across regions. Coastal districts, including Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, and Uttara Kannada, are likely to receive light rain or thundershowers, accompanied by gusty winds of 30-40 kmph. Isolated pockets may continue to experience hot and humid conditions. In north interior Karnataka, districts like Belagavi, Dharwad, Haveri, Gadag, Kalaburagi, Yadgir, Raichur, and Koppal may witness light rain or thundershowers at isolated places, while most other areas are likely to remain dry. Parts of south interior Karnataka, including Shivamogga, Chikkamagaluru, Hassan, and Kodagu, may also receive light rain with gusty winds, even as dry weather is expected to prevail elsewhere in the region.

More than a race: 10K run showcases spirit & strength

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Pics: Chethan Shivakumar

COSTUMES, CAUSES & CONSCIOUSNESS

Dancing to the beats of Dollu Kunita, carrying messages for a better Bengaluru, and pledging support for social causes, participants turned heads with their creativity at TCS World 10K Bengaluru.

Among them was 64-year-old KC Janardhan, who drew attention by dressing up as 'Depression Asura' (depression demon) to raise awareness about the rising number of suicides linked to mental health struggles. Highlighting issues such as academic pressure, financial stress, and relationship failures, his costume carried a clear message: "Don't embrace me, don't let depression embrace you."

The event also saw participants dressed as popular and symbolic figures, such as Spider-Man, Donald Trump, angels, and devils. With the LPG crisis remaining a major concern, some participants also turned up dressed as LPG cylinders, using the race as a platform to spotlight everyday issues.

EVERY STEP COUNTS: First-time, senior, and differently abled runners turned the TCS World 10K Bengaluru into a celebration of grit and community Sunday. In all, over 33,000 running enthusiasts participated in the event

WORDS FOR THOUGHT

Cheerful poster holders lined the route with messages like "woke up early on a Sunday to see you run" and "even traffic couldn't stop you," as supporters with placards kept runners motivated throughout the race.

CROWD WAS AMAZING: OMAR ABDULLAH

Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Omar Abdullah, who ran alongside his son Zahir Abdullah, was among the participants who sweated it out in the open 10K category.

Speaking to reporters after completing his run in about 50 minutes, Abdullah said, "I started a little too fast, and then the humidity of Bengaluru caught up with me. But the crowds were amazing. I've run in other cities as well, but the passion and support that I saw from the crowds here were amazing. It really gives us a lot of energy."

The participants include Mysuru MP Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar, Bangalore South MP Tejasvi Surya and his wife Sivasri Skandaprasad, badminton legend Prakash Padukone and his daughter Anisha.

permanent loss of mobility, she completed her run in a wheelchair. "I did this easily and would definitely do it again," she said.

Another participant, Suseela Siyadri, who is visually impaired, said the run was not simply about participation, but about joy. She spent much of the race cheering on fellow runners, lifting spirits along the route with her infectious enthusiasm. "A fantastic run. I had a lot of fun."

Habit & health

For some, fitness is not a recent pursuit but a lifelong habit. At 78, Nirmala spoke with the confidence of someone who has established a daily discipline. "For the last 7-8 years, I've been a fitness enthusiast," she said. "I go for a 5km walk every day."

At the finish line, Ashwath Narayan summed up the experience in just two words: "Very good." He had taken part in the run alongside his friends Ramnath Sharma and Sheshan, both over 70 and retired employees of TCS, turning the event into a fitness challenge and a reunion of old friends.

For others, the fitness journey began with a personal health scare. Neelam, a resident of DLF Akshaya Nagar, said walking became a necessity after doctors advised her to stay active because of a heart condition. "I had a bit of a heart problem, so the doctor suggested walking," she revealed. Having moved from Delhi to Bengaluru, she found that the city itself made the habit easier to sustain. Today, she clocks between 15,000 and 20,000 steps daily — a routine built through consistency and determination.

On the streets of Bengaluru Sunday, the message was clear: fitness is not about speed, medals, or competition. It is about showing up, moving forward and proving — one step at a time — that limits are often meant to be challenged.

— **Kaushal Kumar V and Nyasa Gupta**

6 youths from TN in custody for dacoity

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Six young men from Tamil Nadu have been arrested by Konanakunte police on charges of dacoity on April 17 at a house where a few students from Kerala lived.

The arrested men — Abhinesh, Kalaivendan, Prem Kumar, Kumaran, Naveen Kumar, and Vimal Raj — had barged into the house claiming the students possessed ganja. According to the complaint filed by Irfan Muhammed, a native of Kerala and hotel management student at a private college in Gottigere on Bannerghatta Road, he along with his collegemates, also from Kerala and identified as Adarsh Merara, Darvin Joly and four others, stayed in a house in Pavamananagar in Kembattahalli. The four others had gone home.

@STUDENTS' HOUSE

Around 10.20pm, a group of six armed men barged into their house, threatened them and demanded that they part with their valuables. When they refused, the gang assaulted them with knives. Meanwhile, three of their friends, Saavad TV, Fazil and Feben, came to meet them around 11.05pm. The gang assaulted them too and left with four phones, two laptops, and a two-wheeler. The gang also forced the victims to transfer Rs 10,000 through a digital payment app.

Police investigation revealed that one of the accused, Abhinesh, was a student at the same college. He had a financial dispute with the Kerala students over the house they were staying in. The house was earlier rented by Abhinesh. Police said Abhinesh invited his friends from Tamil Nadu, all of whom were engineering graduates working in private firms. On April 17 evening, they followed Irfan from college to the house and later returned at night to commit the crime.

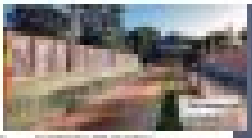
Through the digital payment transaction, police traced the accused to Tamil Nadu on April 21 and brought them to Bengaluru. Looted valuables worth around Rs 3 lakh were recovered.

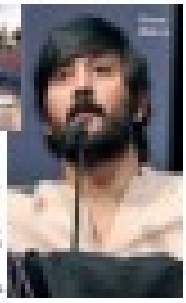
The accused have been remanded in judicial custody. Naveen was earlier involved in an assault case in Tamil Nadu, while the others are first-time offenders, a police officer added.

In cinema, the space for women is still limited, says Sanjjanna

'Things that bothered me earlier don't hit the same way anymore'

Row erupts over Chetan Ahimsa's take on Rajkumar memorial; actor apologises





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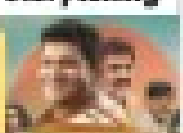

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Accused Was Earlier Held In Cheating Case Of ₹6 Crore

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AI
BIDDING GONE WRONG

Bengaluru: A Mysuru-based restaurateur has filed a complaint alleging that he and several others were duped of over Rs 3 crore in a land deal scam. The accused allegedly posed as an Infosys executive and lured the victim into a purported bid for 53 acres of land in Attibele.

The complainant, Bharath CS, 32, told police he was introduced in early 2025 to Gagandeep alias Gangan N Deep, 31, a resident of Chikkaballapur, through a mutual contact linked to a state minister during a visit to the assistant commissioner's office. Gagandeep allegedly claimed to be regional head (CSR) at Infosys. Bharath said he verified this through a relative of the minister.

A few days later, Gagandeep allegedly persuaded Bharath to participate in a "lucrative" deal involving 53 acres of Infosys land, saying the property could be acquired at a low price through his contacts and a bidding process. Bharath told police he saw a newspaper advertisement about the land sale and was asked to arrange Rs 5 crore.

On Gagandeep's instructions, Bharath emailed CBRE, the consultancy handling the sale, and submitted a bidding form. Later, at a hotel meeting, Gagandeep allegedly claimed he had met officials at the Infosys office in Electronics City seeking waiver of the Rs 5 crore deposit, but "they refused".

He reportedly assured Bharath he would arrange the amount and it could later be refunded from Infosys. Soon after, Gagandeep allegedly sought an urgent transfer of Rs 35 lakh to an account in the name of Kishan Constructions. Bharath transferred Rs 20 lakh first and later Rs 15 lakh. Police said the transactions grew more complex, with Gagandeep allegedly claiming he had collected demand drafts worth Rs 3 crore from Hyderabad-based ANS Constructions, deposited them into Bharath's firm, Anitha Ventures, and then transferred funds to other accounts. Bharath also alleged Gagandeep encashed another Rs 1 crore DD in Anitha Ventures' name without his knowledge. He told police he gave Rs 25 lakh in cash near Hoskote toll. He claimed Gagandeep collected another DD worth over Rs 2.2 crore from a charitable trust without his knowledge.

OTHER CASES

After learning a cheating case was already registered against Gagandeep — which was first reported by **TOI** on April 3 — Bharath approached police on April 24. A senior officer said Gagandeep has already been arrested in another cheating case filed by a Mysuru-based mercantile company involving Rs 6 crore. "Over Rs 2 crore has been recovered and deposited into a govt account," the officer said, adding a case has also been registered against him in Hyderabad.

Gagandeep earlier worked as a consultant at a private firm associated with Infosys in the construction of the Konappana Agrahara Metro station.

Aspiring air hostess files plaint against trio for stalking her daily

Times News Network

Bengaluru: A 20-year-old air hostess student has alleged repeated harassment by three scooter-borne men, who regularly followed her, teased and intimidated her during her daily commute from home to bus stop. Recently, while she was walking home, the accused allegedly hit her on the back.

Distressed, she approached police. She's undergoing air hostess training at a college in east Bengaluru and lives with her family in a village near Bagalur. The accused are residents of the same village. She said she commuted to and from college by bus and the main accused, 22, along with his friends, followed her daily on a scooter and intimidated her. On April 19, they allegedly made a few lewd comments. As they continued to trouble her, she grew distressed and feared stepping out alone.

On April 23, the situation took a more alarming turn. After missing her usual bus around 9am, she called her father, who asked her to return home so he could take her to college in his car. While walking back home, the accused approached her from behind on a scooter and hit her on the back.

Bagalur police detained the accused. Police said the main accused claimed he was in love with the girl and that she had suddenly stopped talking to him, so he was trying to reconnect with her. He said he was only trying to stop her and his hand accidentally touched her.

Disqualified co-op director assaults staff

Sathish KR, also known as Sathish Kadatanamale, a political party functionary from Yelahanka constituency, has been accused of storming a govt office and assaulting staff.

According to a complaint filed by R Prakash Rao, 55, an officer at Sahakara Soudha in Malleswaram, Sathish — who is a disqualified director of the Kadanamale Milk Producers Cooperative Society — allegedly entered the office premises, assaulted staff members, and issued threats to officials.

The incident took place on April 24, around 3pm, when Sathish, along with his associates, allegedly entered the office in connection with a statutory order passed under Section 29(c) of the Karnataka Cooperative Societies Act-1959. The group is accused of obstructing official work, physically attacking staff and verbally abusing them using derogatory language.

Rao stated that upon arriving at the office at 4pm, he was informed of the chaos. When he confronted Sathish, the latter allegedly warned him that he would have the officer removed from service, file a complaint with the Lokayukta and even send him to jail. A case has been registered and a notice has been served to Sathish. TNN

US doc loses gold worth ₹1cr at city wedding hall

Times News Network

Bengaluru: A 52-year-old doctor practising in the US lost 725 grams of gold ornaments worth around Rs 1 crore from a convention hall in east Bengaluru while attending a wedding reception on April 22.

Police said Siruvella Sridevi had come to Bengaluru on April 18 for her elder sister's son's wedding and was staying in Ganganagar. She went to SDP Palace in Katamnallur at 11.30am for the reception.

According to her complaint, her brother K Srinivasamurthy handed over a box containing gold ornaments to her at the venue around 6.30pm. After wearing some of the jewellery, she kept the rest in the box, placed it inside a bag and locked the room allotted to her around 7pm before heading for the reception. When she returned to the room around 7.30pm, the box was missing.

In her complaint, Sridevi told police that a woman working as a domestic help had come to the room while she was getting ready.

Woman says laptop stolen from house

Times News Network

Bengaluru: A 41-year-old woman has filed a complaint with Ashok Nagar police that her laptop worth Rs 59,000 was stolen from her locked house on Anthony Nichols Street.

According to her, the theft took place on April 24 morning after everyone left home and she locked the door with a number lock around 10.15am before leaving for work.

About an hour later, her younger son returned home and found the laptop was missing along with its bag. After searching the house and failing to trace it, he informed his mother.

The woman said she checked with all family members and they confirmed none of them had the laptop. She said she suspected theft by some unknown person.

Police said they are verifying CCTV footage to identify the thief.

Chaotic exit: Co gets injunction to stop director's job switch

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AI
NON-COMPLIANCE

Bengaluru: What began as a resignation over health concerns turned into a legal battle over exit norms at a tech firm in Marathahalli. A city civil court restrained a senior employee from joining another organisation without completing exit formalities.

The dispute involves a software company based in Kundalahalli Gate, and its 30-year-old employee Srijesh P (name changed) from Uttarahalli, who was designated as director of technology in 2021. According to the records, Srijesh sent an email on Jan 14, 2021, resigning from his position, citing family and medical issues.

The company contended that being a senior-level employee, he was governed by its HR policy, which required a two-year notice period and completion of exit formalities. The firm alleged that Srijesh did not comply and failed to complete exit formalities. It further alleged that he attempted to leave the organisation without serving the notice period and sought to join another company. It issued a legal notice dated April 16, 2021, calling upon him to serve the notice period or pay about Rs 46.8 lakh towards notice period compensation. It subsequently filed a civil suit on April 19, 2021, seeking a permanent injunction to restrain him from interfering with its business and from joining another company without complying with exit norms.

Srijesh, in his defence, admitted he was employed with the company since 2012 and had resigned on Jan 14, 2021. However, he denied being bound by any HR policy requiring a two-year notice period. He contended that his appointment letter dated April 24, 2012, stipulated that either party could terminate the employment by giving two months' notice.

He further stated the work pressure in the company led to health issues, including back pain, high blood pressure and diabetes, which prompted his decision to resign. He also denied allegations of misconduct and interference, and contested the company's claims regarding non-compliance with exit obligations.

The court observed the firm failed to prove that the employee was liable to give a two-year notice period before exiting. It also found the firm had established that the employee could not join another company without complying with exit formalities as per its HR policy. The court also noted the employee had not produced sufficient evidence to disprove the company's records or substantiate his claims to the extent required.

The XLIII Additional City Civil and Sessions Court on March 23 restrained Srijesh, his agents or any person claiming through him from interfering with the company's officials in carrying out their duties. It also restrained him from joining any other company without complying with the exit formalities.

2 scooter lifters held, 20 vehicles recovered

Bengaluru: Two alleged two-wheeler thieves were arrested by Talaghattapura police for targeting parked motorcycles across various parts of the city.

The accused are Mohammed Khasif, 22, and Usman Khan, 21, residents of Talaghattapura. According to police, the duo would identify unattended scooters, break the handle locks, and ride away with the vehicles.

They would sell the stolen bikes at throwaway prices for quick cash. When unable to find buyers, they would ride the vehicles until the fuel ran out and abandon them at random locations. In some cases, they even dismantled the vehicles and sold the parts.

The duo stole a scooter belonging to a resident of Varahasandra on the night of March 20, when the vehicle was parked near Yellamma Temple. Investigating that case, police arrested the duo on April 16 near NICE Road along with a stolen two-wheeler.

Cases have been registered in Talaghattapura, Konanakunte, Girinagar, Commercial Street, Banashankari, Tilak Nagar and other police stations. The recovered vehicles are worth Rs 15 lakh. TNN

KSEAB fee hike for answer script copies sparks backlash

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Karnataka School Examinations and Assessment Board (KSEAB) has fixed a fee of Rs 530 per subject for PUC-2 and Rs 400 per subject for SSLC to obtain photocopies of exam answer scripts.

Students and parents are demanding a rollback in these fees, saying these are way too high.

Jagadeesha, a parent and activist of Vidyaranyapuram, Bengaluru, said he had written to the state education minister and the chief secretary on April 13, urging a reduction in fees. Harsha Viraktamath, an SSLC student in Lokapur, Bagalkot district, said, "I have secured 80% in aggregate, but I expected more marks in four subjects. If I must apply for re-evaluation, I need to pay Rs 1,600 plus service charge to obtain photocopies of my answer scripts. Next, I'll have to pay Rs 810 plus service charge per subject for re-evaluation. So it comes to about Rs 4,900, which is a huge burden," he said.

V Rashmi Mahesh, the additional chief secretary, department of school education and literacy, clarified that the govt had not revised the fees for re-evaluation this year. "Fees for SSLC and PUC answer scripts were last revised in 2018. Based on parents' petitions, we will seek a response from KSEAB and review it for implementation from the next year."

Dug-up roads test BSK residents' patience

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TOI
HURDLES ON THE WAY: Stretches across Banashankari 1st Stage have been dug for multiple infrastructure works by GAIL and BWSSB

Bengaluru: Dug-up roads across Banashankari 1st Stage, including in Srinivasa Nagar, Ashokanagar, Vidyapeetha and Hanumanthanagar, have disrupted traffic and left residents coping with dust, even as civic agencies say the works are necessary and nearing completion.

The affected stretches, under Bengaluru West City Corporation, are seeing multiple infrastructure works carried out at once. While Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) is laying pipelines for natural gas in some pockets, Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) is replacing ageing water supply and sanitary lines. A major stretch of Kathriguppe Main Road, between Mount Joy Road and Vidyapeetha Circle, remains partially or fully shut, slowing traffic and affecting businesses. Officials say the water and sewer lines being replaced were decades old and prone to leakages. Workers, however, have faced delays due to hard rock formations and underground internet cables interfering with excavation.

"Workers have been laying pipes quickly, but they had to re-lay our sanitary line as it got damaged while laying the supply line," said Kiran B S, a shop owner. Another shopkeeper said the simultaneous execution of multiple projects had inconvenienced residents and customers. Ganesh A, a resident, said constant dust from exposed soil had become a persistent problem. "We understand the works are essential, but there is a lot of dust from the road in front of our house," he said. Some residents also took to X, complaining of roads remaining dug up for months and alleging poor coordination among agencies.

Bengaluru West City Corporation executive engineer Dharanendra Kumar said the civic body has been pressing BWSSB to restore stretches as work progresses. "Once all the work is complete, the corporation will take up resurfacing of the roads. BWSSB is expected to finish work in about two weeks," he said.

Kumar said GAIL began work in Ashoka Nagar ward and its piped natural gas network may take longer to complete, but assured roads across the area would be fully asphalted once the utility works end.

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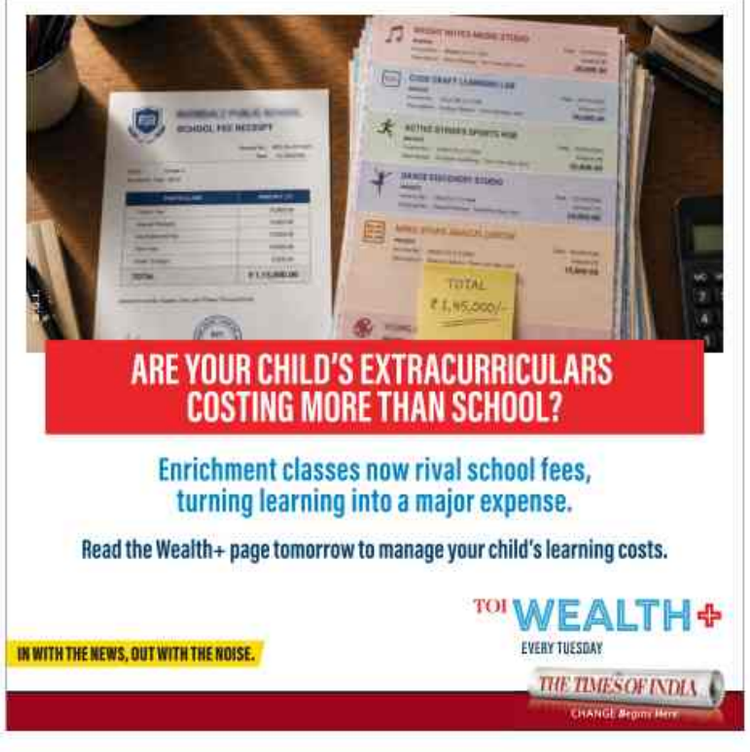
PM lauds Bylakuppe monastery's eco model

In the 133rd episode of Mann Ki Baat Sunday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded the Karma Monastery in the Tibetan camp at Bylakuppe, Periyapatna, in Mysuru district, for its efforts in nature conservation.

PM said the Buddhist tradition teaches people to connect with nature. He noted that Buddha attained enlightenment under a tree and said nature is an integral part of life. Similar efforts are under way across the country, he said, citing Karma Monastery in Karnataka as a good example. He described the monastery as a vibrant forest spanning 100 acres, where more than 700 native trees have been preserved.

Karma Samtenlingpa Rinpoche, founder and chairman of the Bodhisattva Trust, Bylakuppe, said the vision of 'spiritual ecology' was inspired by the 17th Karmapa, Ogyen Trinley Dorje, and aimed to create a sustainable and replicable model. He said the initiative began in 1995 on 100 acres of barren land, which has since turned into a biodiversity hotspot. "It is a replicable model," he said.

He also recalled the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' drive launched by Modi in 2024. TNN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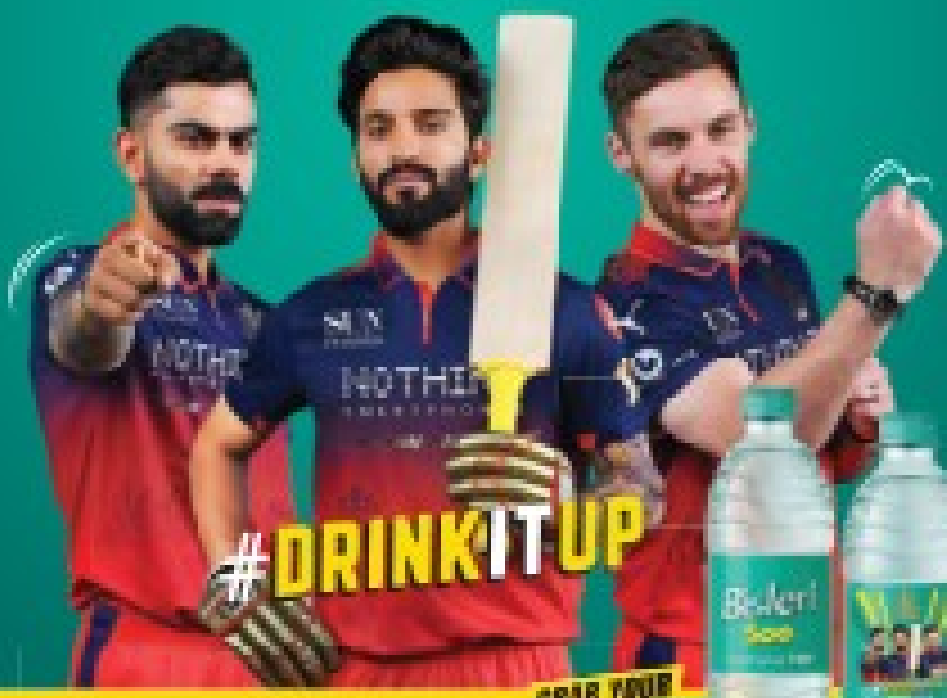

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Troubleshooter Jarkiholi eyes taking over Siddaramaiah's Ahinda mantle

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TOI

REACHING FOR THE STARS: From the Nayaka ST community, Satish Jarkiholi ticks several boxes, but whether he has pan-Karnataka acceptance remains uncertain

> North Karnataka has long sought greater representation, and a politician from Belagavi with Ahinda credentials fits that need. In the current setup, I do not see Shivakumar or others stepping into Siddaramaiah's role as effectively as Jarkiholi
>
> **MN Patil** | POLITICAL COMMENTATOR

Bengaluru: With an eye on the 2028 assembly polls, public works minister Satish Jarkiholi has intensified his political engagements over the past year, increasingly positioning himself as an internal troubleshooter during moments of crisis within Congress. He has frequently held consultations with ministers and senior functionaries, signalling a more interventionist role in party affairs.

In a recent instance, Jarkiholi, 63, met deputy chief minister and KPCC president DK Shivakumar, urging a reconsideration of the decision to remove KPCC minority wing chief Abdul Jabbar over alleged anti-party activities during the Davanagere South by-poll campaign.

Political strategists view this as an attempt to emerge as a key face of the Ahinda (minorities, backward classes and Dalits) social coalition and a potential contender for the CM job in a post-Siddaramaiah phase within Congress.

Siddaramaiah is widely seen as the principal architect of Ahinda politics. He built a broad coalition rooted in his Kuruba background and reinforced it through welfare schemes such as Anna Bhagya and Ksheera Bhagya during his first tenure, and now through the five guarantees. Analysts credit him with consolidating this into a durable vote base, establishing himself as a mass leader.

Now, as Congress looks beyond the 77-year-old CM, internal discussions have turned to second-line functionaries capable of sustaining this social coalition. Political observers say Jarkiholi's recent moves reflect a calibrated attempt to expand his acceptability within this framework.

For now, he has signalled restraint on leadership ambitions, with Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar continuing their contest for the top post.

"He has begun to stand out, suggesting a calculated attempt to position himself as the next-generation Ahinda leader," said a senior Congress functionary. "The party cannot rely on a single face indefinitely. Members like Jarkiholi are trying to build wider social acceptance."

Political analyst Vishwas Shetty said: "He is expanding his base without appearing confrontational. This is crucial in a party where transitions are often negotiated."

A six-time MLA from Yamakanmardi, Jarkiholi belongs to the Nayaka Scheduled Tribe community. He is from a politically dominant family, often referred to as 'sahukars' in the region. His brothers, Ramesh and Balachandra, are BJP MLAs, while another, Lakhan, is an independent MLC. The family retains cross-party clout in Belagavi and surrounding districts. Within the govt, Jarkiholi has maintained a measured equation with Siddaramaiah, aligning with his social coalition strategy and avoiding overt leadership assertions. Party sources describe him as a reliable organiser in north Karnataka, with coordination evident during elections and mobilisation of Ahinda support bases.

The Bagalkot assembly by-poll is being seen as a test of his organisational strength. The contest is shaped by caste dynamics, where Congress traditionally depends on Ahinda voters.

But political commentator MN Patil, said: "Jarkiholi is yet to face a real test. While he has a strong base within his community, whether he can secure acceptance across other groups remains uncertain."

I've faith in party, says DKS after two-day Delhi visit

TOI

AIMING TO SWITCH: DK Shivakumar is hoping to take over the chief minister's post from Siddaramaiah after the May 4 election results

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Deputy chief minister DK Shivakumar Sunday reiterated his faith in Congress' high command amid ongoing speculation about a possible change in chief minister.

After spending two days in Delhi meeting senior party brass, including AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge, Shivakumar said he would abide by the party's decision on the top position.

"Whatever must happen will happen," he said. "The high command knows when to take a decision. I shall not speak any further on the matter in the media."

Responding to remarks by senior Congress functionary and cabinet colleague Satish Jarkiholi about "100% confusion" within the party over a possible change of CM and cabinet rejig, Shivakumar dismissed any differences.

"There is no problem among us," he said. "The high command will take a decision and inform us. We will abide by it. Even CM Siddaramaiah has said the same thing."

His remarks come amid speculation that Shivakumar and his brother, former MP DK Suresh, have been lobbying in Delhi over the past few days for the CM post.

Meanwhile, Shivakumar urged his supporters not to install illegal banners and flexes ahead of his birthday on May 15. "If anyone installs banners without paying the advertising fee or erecting it at designated locations, I have personally told the five corporation commissioners to levy heavy fines on them. I will not allow people to spoil the Bengaluru's streets," he said.

'Farewell for BSY'

On the 'Abhimanotsava' event BJP is planning as tribute to mark 50 years in politics of its state patron and former chief minister BS Yediyurappa, Shivakumar said: "It is event to publicly give him a political farewell. They (BJP) must give him something for his contribution over the past 50 years."

SHORT TAKES

Shivakumar visits ailing stats minister

Deputy CM DK Shivakumar visited cabinet colleague D Sudhakar who is undergoing treatment at a hospital here for a lung infection. Sudhakar holds the planning and statistics portfolio. Shivakumar met Sudhakar's family members and doctors and enquired about his condition. He was accompanied by MLA T Raghumurthy. On Saturday, hospital authorities said Sudhakar was on life support and would need a lung transplant if his condition did not improve. Chief minister Siddaramaiah had visited Sudhakar on Saturday.

Sudhakar hid health issue, says HDK

Union minister HD Kumaraswamy accused D Sudhakar, Karnataka's planning and statistics minister of "hiding" his health issues. Sudhakar is on ventilator support following a severe lung infection. Kumaraswamy told reporters in Chitradurga that Sudhakar is suffering but "preserving appearances". "Some Congressmen are taking advantage of the situation by spreading half-truths," he said. He also alleged the govt was spending taxpayers' money to hold an Ahinda convention in Hubballi "to cling to power". He also said he has not yet received an invite to BS Yediyurappa's 'Abhimanotsava' and "would respond" when he gets one.

Congress has hurt Dalits, says Ashoka

Opposition leader R Ashoka said the govt's internal reservation matrix for Scheduled Caste communities was a "a slap" for Dalits, claiming the BJP administration had provided 17% reservation. Ashoka said when deputy CM DK Shivakumar went to Delhi, Siddaramaiah held a cabinet meeting. "This is a conspiracy aimed at portraying Vokkaligas as anti-Dalit community. When he was in JD(S), Siddaramaiah plotted against Deve Gowda, and now he is employing the same strategy," he alleged. He also said BS Yediyurappa's 'Abhimanotsava' is a "non-BJP party event". "Family members will decide whom to invite, including those from JD(S)," he said.

Rajasthan CM seeks agritech investment from Bengaluru

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

TOI

THREE CHEERS: Chief minister Bhajan Lal Sharma with members of the Rajasthani diaspora in Bengaluru on Sunday. He praised the disapora for "blending" in

Bengaluru: In a shot in the arm for governing Congress, Rajasthan CM Bhajan Lal Sharma Sunday praised Bengaluru's "openness to innovation" and its "expansion as an IT hub" while seeking investment for his state's agritech sector. He spoke at the curtain raiser meeting of Global Rajasthan Agritech Meet (GRAM 2026).

"Bengaluru's energy, innovation and entrepreneurship give us confidence that a revolution is coming in Rajasthan's agriculture," Sharma said. "Through the convergence of technology and agriculture, we will together lay the foundation of a prosperous farmer, a capable Rajasthan and a capable India."

He went on to say, "The youth here, if they apply their technical expertise to agriculture, can take the country to new heights." He said there were numerous opportunities for Karnataka-based businesses in Rajasthan, especially in food processing, cold chain storage, organic farming, and various technologies.

The event was attended by a section of Rajasthani diaspora settled in Bengaluru for decades. "You've earned your place here through your hard work and conduct... you have spread the fragrance of Rajasthan's soil across the world. You not only advanced your trade, but you've also earned a place among the local people there," Sharma said.

The main event, GRAM 2026, is scheduled to be held from May 23 to 25, 2026, in Jaipur, with expected participation from investors, industry leaders and policymakers from across India and abroad.

Rajasthan's agriculture minister Kirodi Lal Meena, said the three farm laws repealed by the Centre in 2021 could have been game changers for the sector. "The PM's team was working toward doubling farmers' income," Meena said. "But many opposed it although the laws were in the interests of farmers. They had vested interests and an environment was created that the govt had to step back."

In relief for farmers, work on TB Dam crest gates complete

Chamaraj Savadi | TNN

TOI

READY FOR RAIN: Authorities were in a race against time to complete installation of the crest gates before the monsoon season kicked in

Munirabad (Koppal): Engineers completed installation of new crest gates at Tungabhadra Dam late Saturday, marking a major milestone which is expected to significantly enhance water storage capacity. The reservoir can now irrigate up to 15 lakh acres of farmland.

Design and execution of work have surpassed expectations, and the final stage — installation of the slim plate for the last crest gate — was completed as scheduled. Authorities were in a race against time to complete the work before the monsoon season kicked in.

ORK Reddy, Tungabhadra board secretary, said while core work is over, minor jobs such as welding and painting remain. "Chain links are expected to arrive by the second week of May. Overall, the dam will be ready for full water storage capacity by the end of May," Reddy said.

The upgrade follows an alarming incident on Aug 10, 2024, when the 19th crest gate was washed away with the dam at its maximum capacity of 1,633 feet (105.7tmcft). A stop-log gate was installed within a week to prevent water loss.

Experts had warned of potential risks to the 73-year-old structure, and authorities decided to replace all crest gates. However, owing to delays last year, storage was restricted to about 80tmcft during the monsoon, forcing excess water to be released downstream. This limited irrigation to a single crop cycle last year.

The current phase of works began with a ceremonial launch on Dec 5, followed by the removal of old gates and the commencement of installation on Dec 24. Work initially began with the 18th crest gate.

On the final day, around 60 workers were engaged at the site, with a similar workforce regularly employed over the past four months. Key officials present included superintendent engineer S Narayana Naik, executive engineer N Chandrashekar, SDOs K Gnaneshwar and KK Krishnakumar, and section engineers G Kiran and DK Pampapathi.

Kiran was confident the dam can now safely withstand heavy inflows and retain water at maximum capacity. He said the chain link installation would not pose significant challenges. The completion of work is expected to bring relief to farmers in the region, since it would ensure better water availability.

Light infantry continues to be relevant

▸ Continued from page 1

The statement described the battalion as reflecting the Army's effort to sharpen its operational edge, while underlining the continuing relevance of light infantry units in modern conflict scenarios.

"The occasion highlighted the vital role of such light units in tackling modern threats," the statement said, adding the raising reaffirmed the Army's focus on "building capabilities and unyielding readiness".

Maratha Light Infantry is among Indian Army's oldest infantry regiments, with a long operational history.

The raising of the 16th battalion comes as the Army continues efforts to strengthen force structure and readiness for varied operational requirements.

Teen comes in contact with live wire, dies

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mangaluru: A 15-year-old boy died after being electrocuted while attempting to pluck coconuts in Bantwal taluk, police said.

The deceased, Mohammed Shaheer, had gone to a plot belonging to Abbas at Kedila along with G Mayabba alias Puttaka and Usman.

Police said Shaheer was using an iron rod to pluck coconuts when it accidentally came into contact with a live electric wire passing nearby, causing electrocution.

He suffered severe burns and died on the spot. A case was registered at Puttur town police station under BNSS Section 194.

455 ex-servicemen to be deployed at central jails

Sources said the prison department will deploy 455 ex-servicemen to seven central prisons, including 250 at Parappana Agrahara Central Prison. The remaining ex-servicemen will be posted in eight district prisons across the state

MORE MANPOWER: Ex-servicemen will be appointed to strengthen surveillance, discipline, and overall prison management and correctional institutions

GUARD RAILS

Central prison	No of posts
Parappana Agrahara, Bengaluru	250
Kalaburagi	55
Mysuru	45
Ballari	35
Hindalaga, Belagavi	30
Shivamogga	30
Dharwad	10

Source: Prison department

▸ Continued from page 1

The finance department has granted Rule 4(g) exemption under the KTPP Act, bypassing a tender process and allowing direct recruitment on a contract basis.

"We will deploy them at places where they do not have direct contact with inmates," he said. He said the department will assess the effectiveness of the arrangement and submit a report to the govt.

Sources said the prison department will deploy 455 ex-servicemen to seven central prisons, including 250 at Parappana Agrahara Central Prison. The remaining ex-servicemen will be posted in eight district prisons across the state.

Late-night gunfire at lawyer's home

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Belagavi: Unidentified assailants opened fire at the residence of advocate Pooja Kakatakar on Mandoli Road between 1am and 2am on Sunday, triggering panic in the area. The shots were fired at the first floor of the house, where her daughter was reportedly studying at the time.

A windowpane on the upper floor was shattered, with a bullet mark clearly visible. Fortunately, no injuries were reported. Police rushed to the spot soon after and carried out a preliminary inspection.

The damaged windowpane and the bullet have been sent to the forensic lab for examination.

Kakatakar, an advocate with nearly two decades of experience, has been provided police protection.

While the motive behind the firing remains unclear, police suspect it could be linked to a high-profile case she is handling.

New law on cards for film, domestic workers

▸ Continued from page 1

New legislation such as Cine Bill and Domestic Workers Bill are being framed by the state to ensure social security for film industry workers and domestic workers.

At an event here, Sandur MLA E Annapurna said the taluk has seen a strong focus on education.

Of the 175 schools, 65 have already been developed into model schools, while plans are in place to upgrade the remaining 110.

Ballari MP E Tukaram highlighted the 'Clinic on Wheels' initiative, under which 13 mobile units have been delivering healthcare services at people's doorsteps.

Tukaram said the initiative has benefited around 8.3 lakh people since 2020, with an average of 1.6 lakh beneficiaries annually.

ALMANAC (27.4.2026)

Mesha Masa 13 Shri Parabhava Nama Samvatsara – Uttarayana – Vasantha Ritu - Tithi: Vaisakha Sukla Ekadasi h. 18-16 Nakshatra: Purva Phalguni h. 21-19 Yoga: Dhruva h. 21-36. 8 Zu'lqada Kali Day 1872692 Mohini Ekadasi
Rahu Kalam 7.30-9am

— KL Vidya Shankara Somayaji

16-yr-old risks life to save boy

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Ismail Fahiz and Md Arshman

Mangaluru: A 16-year-old boy displayed extraordinary courage to save his 10-year-old cousin, who was swept away by waves at Someshwara beach.

The incident occurred Friday evening during a family outing to the beach. Mohammed Arshman, 10, who was at the beach with relatives, mostly women and children, was swept into the sea after slipping unnoticed into the waves.

Without a second thought, his cousin Ismail Fahiz, who noticed this, jumped into the waters and struggled against waves for nearly 10-15 minutes to keep Arshman afloat.

Shawls tied together to pull them to safety

Fahiz's father, Ashraf Mudipu, said he was not present at the spot but later learnt about the ordeal. "My son was holding on tightly to his cousin and trying to keep him above water. The women present may have panicked, but two persons present there stepped in to help. A human chain with those present was formed, and shawls tied together were thrown towards them to pull them out," he said.

According to sources, Fahiz missed catching the shawl in his first two attempts. "On the third attempt, he managed to grab it while still holding the child. That is the last thing he remembers before losing consciousness," Ashraf added.

Both were eventually pulled to safety. While Arshman escaped without injury, Fahiz, exhausted and unconscious, was rushed to a nearby hospital and later shifted to another facility. He was kept under observation for 24 hours and has now been moved to a room.

Fahiz recently scored 509 marks in SSLC exams.

TIMES TRIBUTE
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DEATH ANNIVERSARY

1st Death Anniversary

Mr. K. Vasudevan
(DOD- 27-04-2025)
A year may have passed, but the warmth of your love, continues to light our path.
From
Mrs. Parvathi Kutty (Wife)
Mr. Shaji Kunnath (Son)
Mrs. Shobha (Daughter)
Mr. Jyothi Kumar (S.I.L)
Mr. Nithin Kumar
Mr. Ashwin Shaji

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DEATH ANNIVERSARY

4 TH YEAR REMEMBRANCE

RAMAKKA
W/o. Late B Jayaram
Ex-Counsellor, Malleshwaram
DOD: 27.04.2022
Death is more universal than life, everyone dies but not everyone lives you are one among them and always in our heart
From: Family Members
Phone: 9845344442, 9845091138, 23443118

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(Toll Free)
TO BOOK ONLINE LOG ON TO
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DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Death Anniversary

Bothala ThippeSwamy
(Ex-IAF)
D.O.D : 27.04.2010
Years have passed but the mark our Dad left on this world will never fade. Today we mark the 16th anniversary of his passing and we celebrate the love and memories he gave us.
REST IN PEACE
Remembered by
B. Rameshwari (Wife), Children & Grand Children

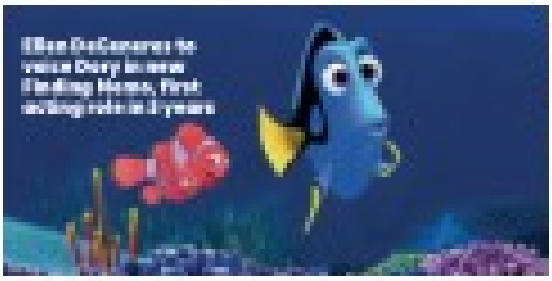
REMEMBRANCE
SHARING MEMORIES

In Loving Memory Of
SMT PADMA K SHETTY
SHIROOR BAILMANE
25.05.1936-27.04.2008
We miss you every moment but always feel that you are around us with your smiling face. Your sweet memory will be cherished by us forever. We thank the almighty for having blessed us with a noble soul like you as part of our family.
K.M. Shetty (Husband)
Avinash, Leena & Rekha (Children)
Jayesh & Mahabaleshwar (Son-in-laws)
Anitha (Daughter-in-law)
Sejal, Priya & Aditya (Grandchildren)

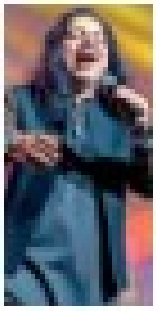
17th Death Anniversary
POOBALAN BENNET
12.02.1945 - 27.04.2009
Words cannot even begin to express our sorrow & sadness.... We cherish sweet memories of you in our hearts, Fondly remembered by wife children and relatives.

In Loving Memory of
ALEX J REBELLO
17.02.1930 - 27.04.2021
There will never be another you! Tribute of love from
Wife Judith Rebello & Family

WHAT'S #TRENDING AND WHY



Ellen DeGeneres to voice Dory in new Finding Nemo, first acting role in 3 years

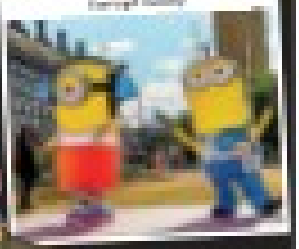


Kailash Kher refuses to sing at an event in Delhi

Alicia Keys calls the music industry a 'good old boy network'

One held in cyber harassment case targeting Akshay's daughter Nitara

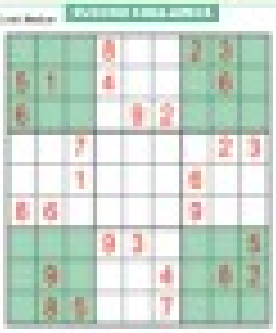
memewatch

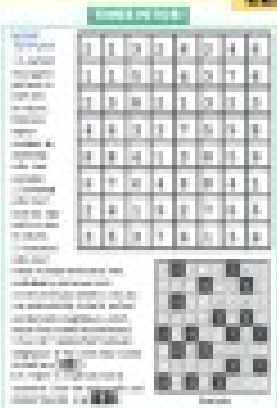


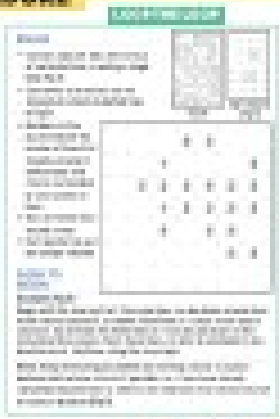
The true cost of our indifference to our heritage

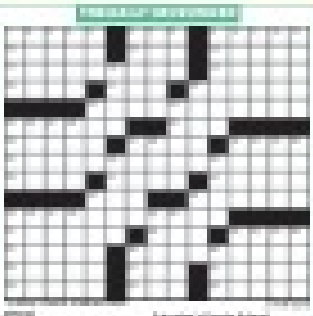
POV

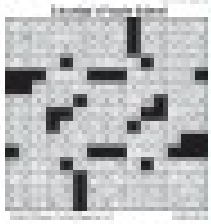
LEISURE

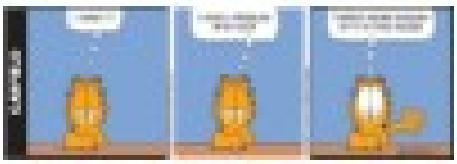


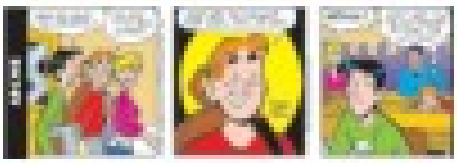


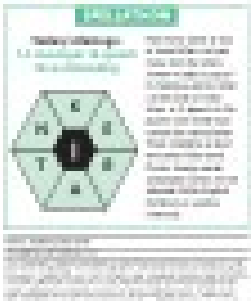


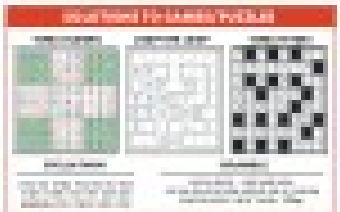






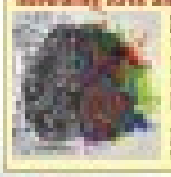






CAREER ROADMAPS

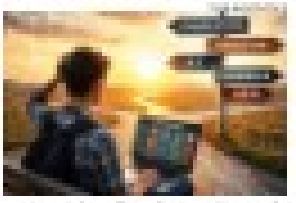
Blend human strengths with tech skills to stay future-proof in AI era



PSYCHOLOGICAL CHANNELLOR

Present distress can reopen unhealed emotional wounds

Role of scientific tools for career guidance in digital age



Japan announces MEXT PG Scholarships

Gamified skills make learning more active, structured and meaningful

SHRI NARENDRA MODI

Honourable Prime Minister of India

JSW JFE Steel Limited

(Formerly Known as JSW Sambalpur Steel Limited)

FORGING AHEAD

STRONGER TOGETHER

LEFT TO RIGHT: Shri Jayanarayan Mishra, Hon'ble MLA - Sambalpur, Shri Tankadhar Tripathy, Hon'ble MLA - Jharsuguda, Shri. Rabi Narayan Naik, Hon'ble Minister of Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, and Drinking Water of Odisha. Shri. Suresh Pujari, Hon'ble Minister of Revenue and Disaster Management of Odisha, H.E. Mr. Keiichi Ono, Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary of Japan to India, Shri. Dharmendra Pradhan, Hon'ble Union Minister of Education, GOI, Shri. Mohan Charan Majhi, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha, Mr. Sajjan Jindal, Chairman, JSW Group, Mr. Yoshihisa Kitano, President & CEO, JFE Holdings, Inc., Smt. Anu Garg, Chief Secretary of Odisha, Mr. Parth Jindal, MD, JSW Cement & JSW Paints and Chairman, JSW Dulux, Mr. Jayant Acharya, JMD & CEO, JSW Steel, Mr. Hiroyuki Ogawa, Board Director, JFE Steel Corporation.

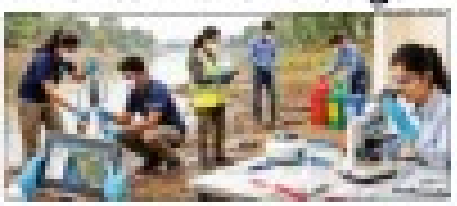
JSW Steel and JFE Steel Join Forces to Power India's Steel Future – a 10 MTPA vision in Odisha.

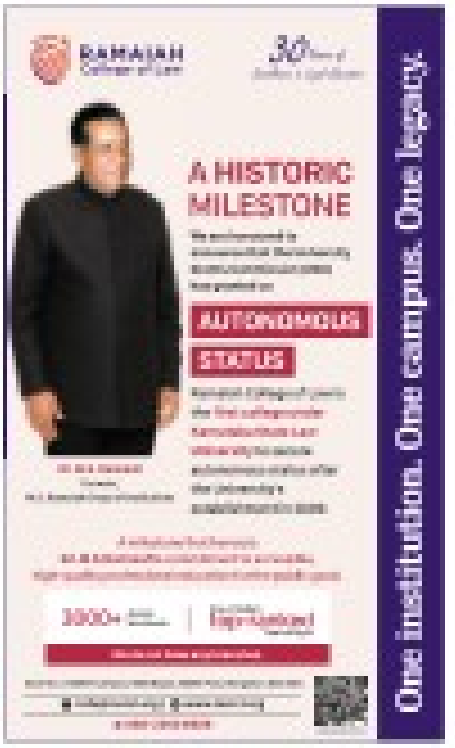
A Landmark 50:50 joint venture between JSW Steel and JFE Steel, two of the world's leading steelmakers.

Located in Sambalpur - Odisha, the facility will scale from **4.5 MTPA to 10 MTPA** and beyond, creating thousands of jobs and reinforcing Odisha's position as a thriving industrial ecosystem.

A STEP FORWARD IN BUILDING A STRONGER, AATMANIRBHAR BHARAT.

Environmental Forensics gains ground in Indian classrooms





TIMES NATION

* THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2026

INDIA ACHIEVES MAJOR MILESTONE IN WIND ENERGY; GENERATION CAPACITY NOW 56 GIGAWATTS: MODI

DMK WILL RETURN TO FORM GOVT & STALIN'S VOICE WILL ECHO IN LOK BHAVAN, SAYS TN MIN SEKAR BABU

HACK OF THE DAY SHARE PHOTOS WITHOUT SHARING YOUR LOCATION

WHAT IT SOLVES: Helps you send photos without accidentally revealing where you live, work, study, or regularly visit

WHAT TO DO: Check Google Photos location-sharing settings before you share images from home, travel, school, or private events

STEPS:

1. **Open** Google Photos and choose the photo or album you want to share
2. **Check** whether location data will be included in that share
3. **Turn off** location sharing for that conversation or shared album if needed
4. **Share** the image only after confirming the setting
5. **Repeat** this for rental listings, school events, children's photos, and home interiors

CAREFUL: This matters much more than people think. A harmless-looking photo can quietly reveal a very specific place

SCAN FOR MORE

Hacks are based on verified public sources. Readers are advised to follow official websites & updated rules

Farmer couple found dead in UP

An elderly couple from UP's Mainpuri was found unconscious near Sondra village Saturday evening, after allegedly consuming poison. They were taken to Saifai hospital, where doctors declared them dead. Police said residents of Sodara spotted Santosh Kumar, 66, and his wife Radha Devi, 60, lying in a field and informed their family.

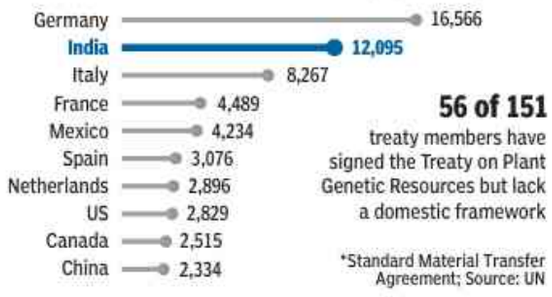
Their son Dilip Kumar, 32, who serves in the Army in Jhansi, returned home upon receiving the news. Another son works in Rajasthan. Police have initiated an inquiry. "They were taken to another medical facility, where they were declared dead. The reason behind the extreme step is being investigated," a police official said. Villagers claimed the couple had been under financial stress due to crop losses and had a dispute over it earlier, which may have led to the incident. TNN

STATOISTICS A slice of life in numbers

Food security focus: India is No. 2 in getting crop genetic material

Under the UN Plant Treaty, India received two-thirds of all crop genetic material sent to South Asia, intended to strengthen food security and climate resilience

No. of SMTA* under UN Plant Treaty, by country



56 of 151 treaty members have signed the Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources but lack a domestic framework

*Standard Material Transfer Agreement; Source: UN

Assam skips legal route to expel 20 B'deshis

Guwahati: Assam authorities sent back 20 Bangladeshi illegal immigrants to their country Friday night, marking the second-largest such batch this year after 21 were expelled in March, **reports Kangkan Kalita**. CM Himanta Biswa Sarma posted Saturday on X that the state would intensify action against illegal entry and continue "pushbacks".

"Assam will fight, pushbacks will continue," Sarma wrote. He framed the move as a shift away from detention and court-led deportation. Authorities would return people directly from border areas rather than pursue what he called prolonged legal processes, he said, adding Assam would not wait for any repatriation pact with Bangladesh.

"Those who only understand kicks cannot be reasoned with words," Sarma wrote, calling the latest group "20 illegal Bangladeshis who were PUSHED BACK last night". Sarma did not specify where or when they were caught or how they were returned.

Solar infra helps India meet record 256GW power demand

Contributes 22% Of Generation To Meet Heatwave-Driven Spike

Atul.Mathur@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Riding on the growing contribution of solar energy to the power generation mix, India comfortably met the peak power demand of 256 gigawatts (GW) on Saturday, the highest ever recorded on a single day, amid soaring temperatures across the country.

At the time of peak demand of 256.1 GW, reached at 3.38pm, solar contributed nearly 57 GW, or about 22% of total generation. Data from Grid Controller of India showed that around 12.30 pm, electricity generation from solar plants and rooftop systems rose to about 81 GW, accounting for roughly one-third of the total generation of 242 GW, underscoring its growing significance in the power mix.

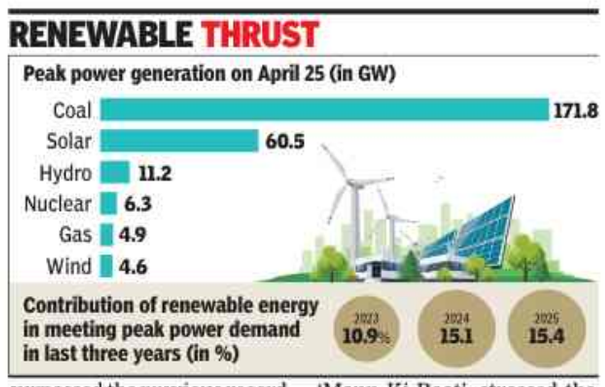
Driven by high consumption, Saturday's demand also surpassed the previous record of 252.1 GW met a day earlier on April 24. The power ministry has projected peak demand to reach 271 GW this year.

While coal-fired plants continue to provide the baseload, officials said the contribution of non-fossil sources — including solar, wind, hydro and nuclear — has increased significantly.

PM Narendra Modi, in 'Mann Ki Baat', stressed the importance of renewables amid global volatility, calling solar and wind key to India's future and urging adoption of clean energy. He also hailed the Kalpakkam fast breeder reactor achieving criticality as a "historic milestone".

Santosh Sarangi, secretary in the ministry of new and renewable energy, said solar generation, including rooftop systems, has been rising rapidly and is playing an important role in meeting peak demand. "With higher installation of battery energy storage systems, it will also be able to meet the evening peak demand in future," he said.

RENEWABLE THRUST



It's 39.2°C in Doon, schools ordered shut

Heatwave-like conditions intensified across Uttarakhand, with Dehradun hitting a season-high 39.2°C. Authorities shut schools and anganwadi centres on Monday amid IMD warnings, as temperatures surged across plains and hills, with Roorkee at 41°C and Pantnagar near 40°C, reports **Gaurav Talwar**. Relief is likely from April 28, with rain and thunderstorms forecast. An orange alert has been issued for multiple districts, with officials expecting a dip in temperatures.

Kuwait sees 1st direct flight post Feb 28 to India

Saurabh.Sinha
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New Delhi: Amid an elusive ceasefire in West Asia, air connectivity to the most cut-off parts of the region resumed very gradually and tentatively. Sunday saw the first direct flights out of Kuwait after Feb 28 to India and some other countries.

As of now, Kuwait's Jazeera is making weekly plans to see how the situation in the region evolves. Gulf Air flights had begun operating between Bahrain International Airport and destinations in India since April 21. The UAE, however, is yet to open its doors to foreign carriers for this summer.

"Happy to be on the first flight to India as flight operations from Kuwait International Airport reopen (Sunday). India stands in solidarity with Kuwait," Paramita Tripathi, Indian ambassador to Kuwait, stated in an X post Sunday, when low-cost Jazeera Airways resumed first direct flights after 57 days of Kuwait International Airport closure.

Photojournalist Raghu Rai was 'master of human moment'

▶ Continued from page 1

The photojournalist followed the cart for half a kilometre before finding the perfect frame. Noted photographer Sondeep Shankar says Rai could create magic from the mundane. "He was the master of the human moment, much like the peerless French photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson. His Bangladesh war pictures, too, had the human touch. They are quite unlike what war photography was then," he says.

Rai was also a master of portraits, as evident in his series on the Dalai Lama and Mother Teresa. The camera in these pictures seems to be looking beyond the body, rather quietly peeping into their souls. The lensman equated the craft to the divine concept of "darshan", which to him was experiencing a place or a person's "inner aura reflected in its entirety".

Rai was born in Jhang in what's now Pakistan's Punjab province in 1942. A civil engineer by training, he got attracted to the craft in his mid-20s. His elder brother, S Paul, and Kishore Parekh, both first-rate photographers, inspired him. His big break came after he visited a friend's farm about 50km from Delhi carrying an Agfa Super Silette camera lent by his brother. In the village, a baby donkey caught his eye. But the beast was camerashy. Rai chased the donkey through the village streets much to the amusement of village boys before snapping pictures of the tired animal. From all the photos of the trip, his brother selected the donkey's and sent it to The Times in London. The newspaper would publish an off-beat photo over half a page every weekend those days. Rai's unusual snap found a place. "That was the beginning of my journey as a photographer," he wrote in the introduction of the book, "Picturing Time", a collection of his finest work. Rai's first exhibition happened in 1969. Three years later, after seeing his one-man show at Paris' gallery Delpire in 1972, the peerless Henri Cartier-Bresson nominated him to Magnum Photos, the global photo cooperative.

He started his journalistic career working for The Statesman. Later he excelled at India Today, one of his photo features on the bonding between a blind beggar and a mentally challenged girl from different religious communities in Baroda, remains a remarkable piece of photojournalism. Over the decades, Rai became a legend and an institution in his lifetime. "He was an inspirational figure for lensmen in India and abroad," says Shankar.

Credit and copyright: Raghu Rai

ICONIC FRAMES: A group of Congress politicians, stand around a table while Indira Gandhi—the only woman in the frame—remains seated; his black-and-white photograph, 'Burial of a Child', of the Bhopal gas tragedy

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I, SUJAT PREMNATH AGNIHOTRI, W/O; PRAVEEN CHANDRA MISRA,R/O-FT NO.101, NO 468 GAGAN SURYA A, BHUVANESHWARI NAGAR, BLR-560032.Have changed my name as SUJAT AGNIHOTRI.

I K Radhamani, W/o K Vasudevan Nair R/o 163, 2nd Floor, Chennakeshava Nilaya, Sai Nagara, Bangalore 560097 Shall Be Known as KOZI KALLATHIL RADHAMANI for all Purpose

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NSO: Out-of-pocket spending still drives hospitalisation costs

Rema.Nagarajan
@timesofindia.com

Despite substantial increase in the coverage of health insurance or finance schemes, which only covers inpatient treatment, between 2017-18 and 2025, out-of-pocket expenditure by patients and their families still accounts for almost all of the spending on hospitalisation. This was revealed in the latest household consumption survey on health conducted by the National Statistical Office in the Jan-Dec 2025 period.

In the 2017-18 survey, over 90% of hospitalisation expenses were shown to be borne by the patient through household income or savings and borrowings, with sale of physical assets and contribution from friends and relatives making up most of the remaining. At the time, coverage of govt-sponsored health insurance or financing schemes was just 13% in rural areas and 9% in urban India.

In this survey, the coverage has increased to almost 46% and 32% respectively. However, out-of-pocket expenditure on hospitalisation still accounted for an average of Rs 31,500 per hospitalisation or almost 95% of the average total spend on each episode of hospitalisation in rural areas. In urban India, the average hospitalisation expenditure was almost Rs 47,000 and the average OOPE for hospitalisation about Rs 39,000, or around 83% of the total.

A similar pattern is reflected in the data on the cost of childbirth too. The average out-of-pocket expenditure per childbirth was almost as much as the average medical expenditure per childbirth. The average OOPE seems to be slightly less than the average medical expenditure for childbirth and for hospitalisation in urban India, which might be an indication that the health schemes are being utilised better in urban India.

The average medical expenditure due to hospitalisation has almost doubled between 2017-18 and 2025, with rural India showing greater increase. The jump was 97% in rural areas compared to 77% in urban areas. Unsurprisingly, hospitalisation in private facilities accounted for a bigger jump than in public facilities.

HEALTH REPORT CARD

Avg medical expenditure per hospitalisation compared to avg OOPE (Out-Of-Pocket Expenditure) per hospitalisation (₹)

	RURAL			URBAN		
	Avg exp	Avg OOPE	OOPE share%	Avg exp	Avg OOPE	OOPE share%
Govt hospital	7,330	6,905	94.2	6,413	6,032	94.1
Pvt hospital	49,734	47,710	95.9	66,955	54,999	82.1
All	**32,884**	**31,484**	**95.7**	**46,774**	**38,688**	**82.7**

Centre may look at giving legislative powers for Ladakh local bodies in May 22 talks

Bharti.Jain@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: The next round of discussions between home ministry and Ladakh representatives on safeguards for the region will resume on May 22 — as announced by Ladakh LG VK Saxena in a post on X on Sunday — and may look at ways to strengthen local elected bodies with legislative powers and offer further safeguards to the Ladakhi people in matters related to land, culture and employment, among others.

The talks — resuming after a gap of almost three months — come in the wake of revocation of Ladakhi activist Sonam Wangchuk's detention under National Security Act in March, seen by experts as a conciliatory move by the Centre to earn the trust of Ladakhi groups.

On X, Saxena said, "I am pleased to announce the ministry of home affairs, Govt of India, has taken a decision to convene a meeting of the subcommittee for political dialogue on 22 May."

He shared in a separate post that home minister Amit Shah will visit Leh on May 1 to pay respects to the holy relics of Lord Buddha on the occasion of Buddh Purnima.

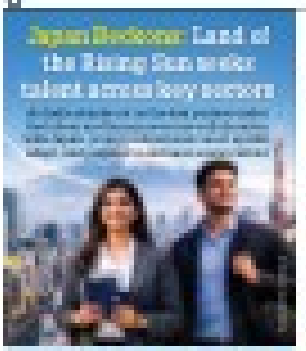
At the last meeting of the high-powered committee in early Feb, the home ministry had heard the demands of Ladakh bodies Apex Body Leh and Kargil Democratic Alliance, including for statehood and Sixth Schedule status, and explained the legal and financial limitations in considering them. The Ladakh leaders were told to come back with a revised proposal indicating the financial viability of their demands.

Govt: About 98% of LPG bookings are now online

Atul.Mathur@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: About 98% of LPG refill bookings are now taking place digitally, while 94% of deliveries are based on a delivery authentication code (DAC) to maintain transparency and prevent diversion of cooking gas, govt said on Sunday.

Officials said oil marketing companies were continuing to prioritise LPG supply to households, delivering more than 50 lakh domestic cooking gas cylinders a day despite the squeeze on supplies due to the geopolitical situation. They added that 71% of refills were earlier booked digitally — through mobile apps, IVRS calls and SMS — which increased to nearly 80% in mid-March and has now reached 98%. Similarly, deliveries authenticated through DAC rose from 53% in pre-crisis days to 72% in March and are now at 94%. DAC is received on the consumer's registered mobile number.



Japan Workcation: Land of the Rising Sun seeks talent across key sectors

How Indian graduates are tapping new international pathways for careers and residency

Overseas opportunities are no longer contingent on studying abroad first; with the right skills, even a domestic degree can directly open doors, writes Divyansh Chandhari

B-school applicants prioritise upskilling over career switches amid shifting mobility: GMAC Survey

Global MBA appeal continues to dip: Study

The 'Silent' physical inactivity crisis among Indian youth

Children in rural areas tend to be more physically active, largely due to higher reliance on active transportation such as walking or cycling

Invention of the Obvious?

CITY CITY BANG BANG

SANTOSH DESAI

I never saw old people use a walker when I was young. They hobbled along with the help of a walking stick, but something as simple as a walker had not been invented, or at least was not in popular use. Globally, the walker was invented as late as 1953, and the modern wheeled version appeared only in 1978. Given that the elderly have faced mobility issues since the beginning of time, and none of the constituent parts of the walker are technologically complex, why would it have taken so long to think of a solution like this?

Then there is the wheeled suitcase. I remember as a child seeing an ad on TV when that revolutionary invention was first launched by a brand. It felt like a revelatory moment, that sudden sense of liberation at not having to lug heavy suitcases around. Both wheels and suitcases have existed forever, and yet the idea of putting the two together occurred only in 1972, to a certain Bernard D. Sadow.

Or consider the mop with a handle, an innovation that freed people from having to squat on their haunches and clean the floor. For generations, the humble poccha reigned, and toiling away while cleaning the floor was an accepted part of life. Or oven mitts, that simplest of protections for actions that were clearly dangerous, appeared only in the late 19th century. Scissors for left-handed people arrived only in the 1960s, despite scissors having existed for centuries. Left-handedness was treated as a defect rather than a legitimate user need.

And then there is the menstrual pad. Women made do with whatever was available—rags, old clothes. The modern pad emerged only in the late 19th century, the tampon only in the 1930s. There was no technological issue. The need occurred to half the population monthly. It advertised itself in the most painful way possible, and yet, no need was felt for a solution. Technology was busy solving bigger, more 'manly' problems.

Why did it take so long for solutions to emerge? There could be two possible reasons. One is that of cultural blindness. When inconvenience is normalised, we stop noticing it. Cleanliness requires labour, it needs the sincerity of intent. Old age is difficult, and frailty is natural. Fire is hot, and putting one's hands in an oven is obviously a dangerous act—some burns are inevitable. Some inconveniences are just part of life.

But there is another factor at work and that has to do with power. The person spending hours bent over a floor was not blind to her discomfort. She felt it in her spine, carried it home in her body every evening. What she lacked was not awareness but standing. She was not important enough for her power to count.

As it turns out, necessity is not the mother of invention, noticed necessity is. The problem needs to affect the important, before the problem is seen as important. The long-handled mop arrived when middle-class households began cleaning their own floors. What changed was who the problem belonged to

As it turns out, necessity is not the mother of invention, noticed necessity is. The problem needs to affect the important, before the problem is seen as important. The long-handled mop arrived when middle-class households began cleaning their own floors. The wheeled suitcase became urgent when business travellers lost access to porters. The walker became necessary when elderly people started living longer, alone, in societies that expected them to manage independently. The problem in each case had existed for generations. What changed was who the problem belonged to.

V.S. Naipaul, writing about India, talked about a sweeper who defined his role not through the act of sweeping, but by being a sweeper. Labour was not an action, but a source of identity. And being a sweeper necessarily involved hardship. Hardship, in this case, is not a bug but a feature.

And this factor is at work in most of these delayed inventions. Invisibility here is a function of social architecture. The menstrual pad is a clear case in point. Women, in some sense, did not deserve to have their suffering alleviated. Their role as women almost demanded that they carry this burden uncomplainingly. Gender is a recurring offender— the use of female crash test dummies has begun as late as 2025!

There is an even deeper layer at work here. Culturally, there has been a tendency to valorise pain and inconvenience. Effort has often been seen through a moral lens. Struggle is seen to be a form of virtue. Ease gets decoded as softness. Seeking convenience is a form of self-indulgence, particularly by those lower down in the power hierarchy. The easy way carries the stigma of the easy way out. When difficulty becomes synonymous with virtuousness, change is not even asked for. The combination of cultural blindness, power structure and the larger moral narrative that sees difficulty as a virtue have all contributed to the delay in seeking solutions that were overdue. Suffering, when embellished by philosophical endorsement, is a surprisingly difficult thing to dislodge.

The story of technological progress is not driven entirely by the intensity of the need or by the ease in delivering a solution. It is the story of how our moral imagination expands and how we extend it to those corners of everyday life which were seen to be unworthy of our attention. The invisible question all along has not been what can be invented, but what deserves to be invented? Our long delayed obvious inventions were not held up because of a lack of ideas. They were waiting for us to recognise that all human pain and difficulty deserves to be eased. That recognition, it turns out, is the hardest invention of all.

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Brics consensus on West Asia elusive

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The Brics meeting of officials on the West Asia last week could not produce a consensus document because there was sharp difference of positions among members who are party to the conflict, said official sources.

Efforts to bridge gaps by all others were not successful, according to Indian authorities. India holds the Brics presidency this year and will host the foreign ministers' meeting next month, ahead of the summit later this year. In the absence of a consensus, the meeting last week of junior foreign ministers and special envoys could not produce a joint statement.

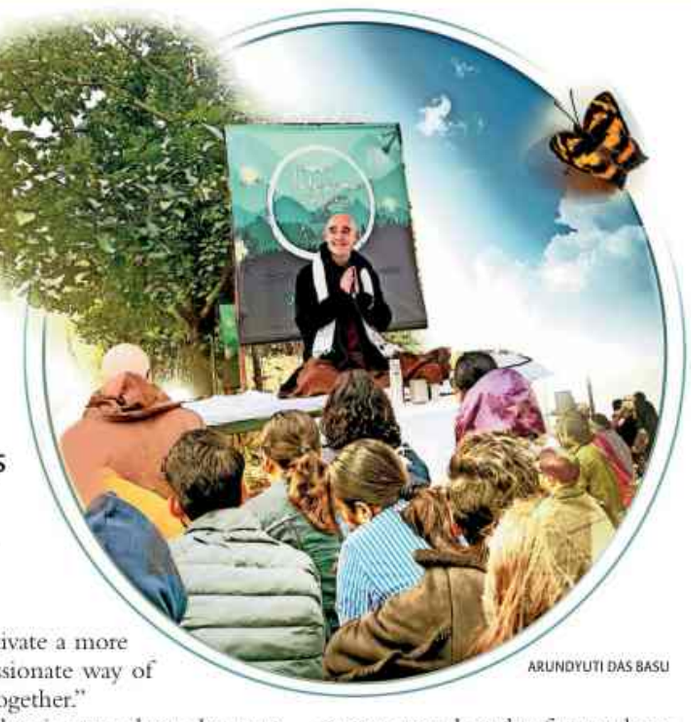
Instead, a Chair's statement was issued which said members expressed deep concern on the recent conflict in the West Asia and offered views and assessments on the matter. The discussions covered the Palestine issue and the Gaza situation, including provision of humanitarian aid, the role of UNRWA, zero-tolerance approach to terrorism, welcoming the ceasefire in Lebanon.

While Iran has been seeking Brics solidarity against the US and Israel, urging India to work towards a consensus, a joint statement has remained elusive with the UAE and Saudi Arabia — which are party to the conflict — also in the grouping of the major emerging economies.

Govt sources also ruled out any dilution of India's position on the Palestine issue, reiterating that India remains committed to the 2-state solution.

THE SPEAKING TREE

Mindful Makeover



ARUNDYUTI DAS BASU

After a five-day mindfulness retreat at Jamun Village, Dehradun, organised by Ahimsa Trust, and conducted by Zen monks from Plum Village, France, NARAYANI GANESH shares learning practices that lead to personal peace, societal harmony and well-being

Jamun Village in Dehradun, is a mindfulness project inspired by Vietnamese Zen master Thich Nhat Hahn's Plum Village in France. The monk promoted mindfulness in every thought, word and deed as a way to achieve personal peace and societal harmony, and that is what his followers in India, guided by Dharmacharya Shantum Seth's volunteer-driven Ahimsa Trust, seek to do.

Breathing in, breathing out;
breathing in, breathing out;
I am blooming as a flower;
I am fresh as the dew.
I am solid as a mountain,
I am firm as the earth; I am free.
Breathing in, breathing out;
breathing in, breathing out;
I am water, reflecting what is real,
what is true,
And I feel there is space deep inside of me;
I am free, I am free, I am free.

That we need to be reminded to take deep breaths is so typical of our frenzied lifestyle that we even forget how to breathe; our lives depend on how well we breathe. The beautiful song, 'Breathing in, breathing out', among many others written by Thich Nhat Hahn (aka Thay), captures the core spirit of the community that believes deeply in the practice of mindfulness in sync with nature and other beings. The revelatory five-day retreat opened up a space for inner peace and revival, free of haste and stress. As the Ahimsa community puts it, "When we invest in mindfulness, we cultivate a more compassionate way of being together."

And so it came about that two friends and I enrolled for a five-day mindfulness retreat at Jamun Village, conceived and established by volunteers of Ahimsa Trust, encouraged by Thay, who visited the site and planted a tree, bestowing his blessings, in the year 2008. During this trip (his last to India), he led an international group of pilgrims along with Plum Village monks, on the Buddha Path from Varanasi to Sarnath, Nalanda and Rajgir. He gave discourses at every destination on the Buddha's teachings.

In February 2026, the Jamun Village retreat pre-event was a gathering at Doon School, where Plum Village monks engaged with students and others, concluding with walking meditation around the campus. At Jamun Village, monks from Plum village – Bro Dao Hahn (Bro Action), Bro Thien Duc, Sr Tam Muoi (Sr Samadhi), Sr Trang Hein Tam (Sr Moon of Kind Heart), and Bro Chan Phap Lai — along with Shantum, gave talks and initiated participants in different mindfulness practices including walking, sleeping, eating, meditating, working and relaxing. Five groups were created, each assigned the name of a tree (mine being Sheesham) and a monk group leader would conduct a 'dharm sharing' session in afternoons, where you could express your thoughts, fears and anxieties and happy experiences.

HEAL YOURSELF

Talks given by monks that ended with audience interaction were conducted under the Bodhi Tree that Thay planted on his visit here. The salubrious setting, blue skies and birdsongs formed a fetching backdrop to the pearls of wisdom that were being shared in simple, easy-to-understand ways, practices that one can easily adopt even in the midst of hectic routines. Enabling oneself to connect with the miracle of life is one of the goals of practising mindfulness in everything we do. And the miracle of mindfulness is that it enables us to recognise, accept, embrace, and gain insight so that we can inter-be in this beautiful interconnected existence.

The five mindfulness trainings shared were about reverence for life, true happiness, true love, loving speech and deep listening, nourishment and healing, based on the Buddha's teachings including the four noble truths and the eightfold path. Thich Nhat Hahn said, "Because suffering is impermanent, we can transform it. Because happiness is impermanent, we have to nourish it." What better way to nurture and achieve joy, peace and harmony than to make mindfulness practices part of our daily lives? ■

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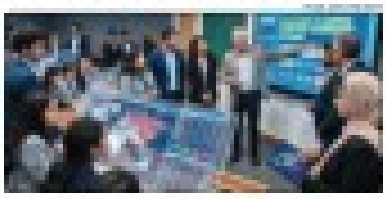
AI and geopolitics reshape management education



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TIMES NEWS NETWORK

PM Modi offers prayers at Thanthania Kalibari in Kolkata

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday evening prayed at the famous Thanthania Kalibari temple — one of the few abodes of goddess Kali where meat is offered as 'prasad' — before his roadshow in Kolkata in what political circles interpreted as his emphatic signal to voters to dispel TMC's projection of BJP as a 'north Indian party' steeped in vegetarianism and uneasy with West Bengal's food habits rooted in non-veg meals.

Thanthania Kalibari, where the deity is worshipped as Maa Siddheshwari, is one of the oldest and most revered Kali temples of Kolkata, and is believed to have been frequented by Ramakrishna Paramahansa where he sang hymns to the goddess.

CM Mamata Banerjee has led TMC's charge that if elected to office, BJP will seek to curb the state's meat-eating food habits and substitute it with the practice of north Indian states, where non-veg consumption is frowned upon during religiously auspicious days.

Her projection of BJP as a party of outsiders unfamiliar to Bengali values has been central to her political attacks, pushing the national party to make concerted efforts to dispel the narrative.

BJP functionaries, including MP Anurag Thakur, had shared their pictures of eating 'maach-bhat' (fish and rice) during their campaign in Bengal.

PM woos Matua community, vows to fast-track citizenship

New Delhi: Sharpening BJP's outreach to Matua community in the last leg of his West Bengal poll campaign, PM Modi on Sunday offered prayers at its main temple in North 24 Parganas district and reiterated at a public meeting his govt's resolve to fast-track Indian citizenship for its members.

BATTLEGROUND WEST BENGAL

"Prayed at the Matua Thakur Temple earlier today. The ideals of Sri Sri Harichand Thakur Ji and Sri Sri Guruchand Thakur Ji continue to illuminate our society," he posted on X, paying tributes to the community's early spiritual leaders.

In a message that emphasised his association with the sect, which was founded in Orakandi (now in Bangladesh) and has influence in over 32 assembly seats, mostly going to the polls in the 2nd phase on April 29, he posted a picture of his 2019 meeting with its matriarch Binapani Thakur. Matuas' hearty endorsement of BJP was critical to its splendid show in the state in 2019 Lok Sabha polls and then emergence as the main challenger to TMC in 2021 assembly elections, but things have since cooled off a bit as CM Mamata Banerjee stepped up her efforts to woo its members and the much-vaunted CAA has not turned out to be as smooth an affair in grant of citizenship to non-Muslim refugees as initially thought.

TMC has long alleged that CAA will end up harming Matuas by entangling them in a web of documents tracing their origin to Bangladesh, when most of them, for all practical purposes, already enjoy several rights in India. TNN

Not democracy but TMC's 'reign of terror' prevails in Bengal: Rahul

New Delhi: Congress leader **Rahul Gandhi** on Sunday alleged it is not democracy but "TMC's reign of terror" that prevails in West Bengal today. "Intimidating, attacking, and eliminating opposing voices after votes are cast — this has become TMC's defining character," he said, ahead of next phase of polls.

Condemning the killing of party worker Debdeep Chatterjee, allegedly by TMC activists, Rahul on X shared a post by Bengal Congress unit which highlighted that Debdeep, who was closely associated with Asansol North Congress candidate Prasenjit Puitandi, was brutally murdered during violence after the polls' first phase. Rahul added that the "murder" by "TMC-affiliated goons" is utterly reprehensible.

In a separate post on X, he said the "magician" has run out of tricks and young India can now see through him, as he attacked PM Modi over the women's reservation issue. TNN

DGCA tightens rules for foreign airlines operating in country

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New Delhi: India has tightened the rules for foreign airlines operating to and from the country. Now, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) can "revoke or suspend" a foreign airline's authorisation to operate to India for lapses like not meeting safety standards. In one of his first orders after taking over as DGCA chief, Vir Vikram Yadav said foreign airlines "shall nominate or appoint a local representative to represent it before DGCA for all its matters."

While Indian carriers have to comply with rules regarding consumer protection, India's aviation regulator did not have that remit over foreign ones. That changes now. Foreign "airline shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining an effective passenger grievance redressal mechanism and ensure that all passenger complaints, disputes, or operational discrepancies are addressed promptly, fairly, and transparently... airline shall ensure all passenger grievances are captured in database, including details of complaints, their current status, and resolution thereof along with prescribed timeline. Periodic reports from such database shall be submitted to the DGCA as and when asked for," said the circular issued last week.

Pic for representation

DGCA can now 'revoke or suspend' a foreign airline's authorisation to operate for lapses like not meeting safety standards

The grounds for cancelling or revoking foreign airlines' authorisation for India flights include their substantial ownership and effective control not being vested with govt of the country designating the airline or its national, and not maintaining safety and aviation security standards.

Flight fire: Crew member sustains injury

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A cabin crew member sustained a sprained ankle. The other crew members are unharmed," it added.

The runway was closed for operations for about 3 hours till the aircraft was removed there following evacuation of everyone on board. The DGCA is probing this and has informed its EU counterparts about it.

SWISS said it is "determined to fully understand what led to the incident, including the engine problem. We deeply regret the inconvenience and recognise it may have been stressful and traumatic. The safety of our guests and our crew is always our top priority."

The airline says "all passengers were assisted. We have accommodated them in hotels and rebooked them onto alternative flights."

SCs' panel sends notice to Bengal for Didi's remark

New Delhi: National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) has taken suo motu cogniance of an incident in which West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee reportedly used "derogatory language against the Scheduled Castes community" during an election rally. The commission has issued a notice to state govt and asked for action in the matter.

It has asked chief secretary and Bengal DGP to investigate the matter and submit a report within three days. "This remark constitutes a punishable offence under Section 3(1)(s) of SC and ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act," it said. TNN

Mamata warns against EVM capture, cites '21 N'gram outage

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Kolkata: Bengal CM **Mamata Banerjee** Sunday asked her party Trinamool workers to be alert against "EVM capture" and said complaints of power-cuts were pouring in from EVM strongrooms after the first phase of the assembly polls in the state.

"Look at EC! It is your job to ensure EVMs are not captured. Why is there so much load-shedding? This is clearly an indication of malicious intent. I urge you not to fall in their trap," the CM said at her rallies in Bhowanipore, from where she is contesting. She said that she was leading by

4,000 votes in Nandigram in 2021 Assembly election before power went off at the counting centre.

The trend reversed after the supply resumed and she finally lost the seat to BJP's Suvendu Adhikari by less than 2,000 votes. She challenged the result at Calcutta HC and the matter is still sub-judice.

"Everyone must cast their vote. They will try to tamper with EVMs. If a machine malfunctions, come back to vote again. Do not vote in a machine that has previously malfunctioned. Every EVM must be thoroughly checked. Central forces will try to capture EVMs; they are influenced by EC. Let them do whatever they want. Women should protect EVMs from the poll day until the counting ends," the CM said at her rallies on Sunday.

About HM Amit Shah, she said, "He uses foul language. He is scared. He thinks he will win by spreading fear. Do remember we know how to fight back if you try to stoke fear."

12.9 lakh 'deleted' voters will know today if they can vote on April 29

Kaushik.Pradhan
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Kolkata: Nearly 12.9 lakh "deleted" voters across 142 assembly segments in Bengal going to the polls on Wednesday will learn on Monday whether their names have been reinstated in the electoral rolls.

As per the SC guidelines, names cleared by the SIR tribunals by Monday will be added to the supplementary voter lists 48 hours before the polls. "Names cleared by the tribunals by Monday will get a chance to vote," Bengal CEO Manoj Agarwal said on Saturday.

Across the 142 constituencies, spread over seven districts, the names of 12,87,622 electors were deleted during the judicial adjudication process. In Kolkata, judicial officers rejected 67,632 names. The highest number of deletions was recorded in Kolkata Port (13,395), followed by Chowringhee (10,424).

A district-wise break-up for the second phase of polls shows North 24 Parganas tops deletions (3,25,666). For South 24 Parganas, East Burdwan, and Nadia, the figures are 2,22,929, 2,09,805, and 2,08,626, respectively. Constituency-wise, Metiabruz in South 24 Parganas tops the list with 39,579 deleted voters. Rajarhat–New Town saw 24,132 deletions. Matua-dominated seats such as Ranaghat North East, Ranaghat South, and Gaighata witnessed 20,796, 17,411, and 19,638 deletions, respectively.

Inclusion of civilians is tied to a growing mission tempo

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Though the proposed second batch will have four civilians they would begin joining mission crews only from the fourth crewed Gaganyaan mission, according to the committee's planning," another source said. The decision to fly only civilians from the fourth human spaceflight mission is on expected lines given that world over, countries have chosen astronauts with military backgrounds until the technology is mature enough to send civilians.

Inclusion of civilians is tied to a growing mission tempo. The planning assumptions envisage 2 crewed missions a year, with astronauts potentially flying again after a 2-year gap following return from a mission. A full astronaut turnaround cycle—selection, training & mission readiness—is estimated at 4.5 years.

The committee has estimated that seven astronauts would initially suffice for operational needs in the second batch, but raised the number to 10 after accounting for possible international mission opportunities and attrition.

Another major shift is planned from the seventh crewed mission, when crew size is proposed to rise from two astronauts to three, enabled by augmentation of the Gaganyaan crew module's capacity.

That expansion is linked to longer-term plans for the Bhartiya Antriksh Station, where scientific utilisation is expected to require a larger and more diverse astronaut pool.

Isro maps all villages from space

New Delhi: In a big development, Isro has mapped every village in the country from space. The satellite data will go a long way towards supporting decentralised planning by gram panchayats, helping monitor assets and improving grassroots governance, **reports Surendra Singh.** On National Panchayati Raj Day on Friday, Isro said it has completed high-resolution land use and land cover mapping for the entire country at a scale of 1:10000 — this means 1cm on the map represents just 100 metres on the ground, making it sharp enough to distinguish a paddy field from a pond. As per 2011 Census, India had 649,481 villages.

'No nod was given for wedding'

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As the issue escalated, the forest department registered a case against the Sureshwari Devi temple committee under provisions of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, for the alleged violation.

Speaking with **TOI**, Ajay Lingwal, the warden of Haridwar forest range under RTR, said, "No permission had been granted for such an event. After receiving information, tents and other arrangements were removed on Sunday."

Meanwhile, the wedding rituals were allowed to be conducted inside the temple. Officials said the wedding was "held in a restricted manner without any elaborate arrangements".

Meerut shooting accused destroyed CCTV evidence before fleeing: Cops

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Around 11pm, a heated argument erupted between Kumar and Amardeep over the cake-smearing row, and it took an ugly turn after the former left the place only to return with a pistol.

SP (rural) Antriksh Jain said, "Amardeep and Manish were shot at from a close distance, while Akash, who tried to escape, was chased down and shot." Before fleeing, Kumar removed the CCTV-DVR from the gym premises in an attempt to destroy evidence, police said. Cops were informed around midnight about three men "suffering bullet wounds". They were declared "brought dead" by doctors at a nearby private hospital.

"Forensic teams collected evidence. CCTV footage from other areas is being scanned. Names of some suspects have emerged. An FIR was registered against 10 people, including Kumar (who is in his 30s), under BNS Sections pertaining to murder. Gym owner Rupesh Kumar and two others were arrested Sunday," SP Jain said, adding that "liquor bottles and beer cans were found at the spot". According to the bereaved family, Manish and Amardeep were farmers. Manish is survived by a two-year-old daughter, while Amardeep leaves behind a five-year-old son and a newborn daughter.

TENDER NOTICE greenko

Greenko Demwe Power Limited invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for below referred packages on EPC basis for 1750 MW Demwe Lower Hydro Electric Project located at Parasuram Kund / Brahma Kund Village, Lohit District, Arunachal Pradesh, India.

Project Name : Greenko Demwe Power Limited
Subject : Invitation for Bids – International Competitive Bidding (ICB)
Package (1) : Civil and Hydro-Mechanical Works
Package (2) : Electro-Mechanical Works
Package (3) : Balance of Plant (BoP) and Transmission Lines (TL)

Interested bidders may download the details from website: https://greenkogroup.com/tenders.php

THE ANDHRA PRADESH MINERAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED
Door No. 294/1D, 100 feet Road (Tadigadapa to Enikepadu Road), Kanuru, Vijayawada — 521137, Andhra Pradesh, India.
Tel: +91-866-2429999 Fax: +91-866-2429977 Email: contracts-ho@apmdc.in

NOTICE INVITING QUOTATION

RFQ.No.APMDC/P&C/CAMC-EMS/M'Pet/2026-27 Dt.27.04.2026
APMDC invites Quotations from reputed Agencies for **"Provision of Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract (CAMC) for Environmental Monitoring Systems at Mangampeta Barytes Project"**. For more information on the eligibility criteria, tender fees, timelines and other details, please visit APMDC website (**www.apmdc.ap.gov.in**). The Tender document is available for downloading from APMDC website from 27.04.2026 and the last date for submission of quotation is 18.05.2026.
Place: Vijayawada
Date: 27.04.2026
Sd/- Managing Director, The A. P. Mineral Development Corporation Limited
OIPR No:5048PP/CL/ADVT/1/1/2021-22 Dt: 24.04.2026

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER GUJARAT GAS

Gujarat Gas Limited (GGL), desires to invite bids against Tender(s) under two bid system through e-tendering portal from eligible and interested parties for the following categories:

Sr. No.	Tender ID	Tender Description	Link for accessing the Tender Documents
1	297639 & 297969	Civil, Interior, Electrical & Allied Services at Faridkot office (FFM GA), Punjab and at Dungarpur and Banswara office, Rajasthan	• ggltender.nprocure.com • www.gujaratgas.com/ggl-current-tender/
2	296383	Wet Lease of TYPE-3 MEGC CNG Cascade (6600 WL) including hydrotesting of the cascade	
3	297910	MPLS, Internet Lease Line (ILL), Point to Point L2 Lease Line (p2pl2), Broad Band Connectivity	
4	297918	SDWAN Solution	

Any revision, clarifications, corrigenda, addenda, notifications etc. related to this notice will be updated on the above referred websites only. Interested parties should regularly visit websites to keep themselves updated.

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice No.: Sr.DEE/RS/ELS/CNB/2026-27/ET-04 Date- 24.04.2026

E-Tender Notice

Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer/RS/N.C. Rly. /Kanpur, for and on behalf of the President of India, invite the following open E-Tender for the following work up to Tender Opening Date & Time. The details of the tenders are as under: -

Tender No.: ELS-CNB-2026-27-ET-04

Name of work: Comprehensive Repair/Renewal Propulsion System in Three Phase Electric Locomotive of ELS/CNB, Qty-66 Loco Sets.

Approximate Value: ₹ 19,08,05,994.72 (Rs. Nineteen Crore Eight Lakh Five Thousand Nine Hundred Ninety Four and Seventy Two paisa only). **Bid Security: ₹ 38,16,100.00** (Rs. Thirty Eight Lakh Sixteen Thousand One Hundred Only), **Completion period of work:** 36 Months. **Tender Document Cost:** Nil. **Tender Opening Date & Time: 18.05.5026, 15.30** hrs.

Note: - 1. The complete information along with tender document of above e-Tenders is available on website **www.ireps.gov.in** up to due date & time of tender opening. **2.** Bids, other than in the form of E-Bids, shall not be accepted against above Tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificates issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. **3.** Offer rates quoted in the form of e-tender schedule & duly signed digitally shall be final. No other documents related to offer rates shall be entertained. Tenderers are advised not to attach any document related to offer rates (except undertaking(s) asked). These documents shall be treated as NULL and void and shall not be considered for evaluation of offer. **4.** Documents being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. **5.** This tender notice has also been uploaded on **www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in. 6.** In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached

908/26 FA

North central railways @CPRONCR www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

Haldwani Rudrapur Cluster SWM Society (HRCSWMS)
(Nagar Nigam Haldwani - Kathgodam)

Reference No. 121 Date : 25/04/2026

Re E Tender Notice

Request for Proposals (RFP) are invited for (i)- Processing and Management of Municipal Solid Waste at Haldwani Distt-Nainital" & (ii)- Treatment of Legacy Waste under SWM with Bio Remediation & Bio - Mining Techniques at Haldwani Distt-Nainital" from the eligible Consortium /developers/ Firms through online portal http://uktenders.gov.in Details/ RFP & Schedule of Bidding Process can also be/ Agencies downloaded from this portal from 27 th April 2026.

(Paritosh Verma) Member Secretary/ Nagar Ayukta **(Gajraj Singh Bisht) Honourable Chairman / Mayor**

Maharashtra University Of Health Sciences, Nashik
Dindori Road, Mhasrul, Nashik-422004
Phone No. 0253-2539236
Email: registrar@muhs.ac.in, civil@muhs.ac.in,
Website: http://www.muhs.ac.in

E-tender Notice No-Civil/ 03/2026

Maharashtra University of Health Sciences invites e-tenders for providing temporary services of skilled and unskilled manpower by the contractor on contractual basis for Gardening Work in MUHS Campus, Nashik for a period of two years.

The e-tender form, form fee, earnest money, terms and conditions are published on the website **http://mahatenders.gov.in** The actual work should be inspected before submitting the e-tender.

Date: 27/04/2026 **Registrar**

JAIPUR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Indira Circle, Jawahar Lal Nehru Marg, Jaipur-302004

S. No : JDA/EE & TA to Dir. Engg.-I/2026-27/D- Dated : 24.04.2026

NOTICE INVITING BID

NIB No.: EE & TA to Dir. Engg.-I/04/2026-27

Bids are invited from interested bidders for following works :-

S. No.	UBN No.	Cost of Work (Lacs)	Nature of Work	Last Date
1	JDA2627WLOB00028	543.91	Road Work	11.05.2026

Other particulars of the respective bid may be visited on Procurement Portal website www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in, www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in and www.jda.rajasthan.gov.in.

Executive Engineer & TA to Dir.Engg-I

Raj.Samwad/C/26/1532

25001/50/2627

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, RAYAGADA
Email ID-ccerwcrayagada@gmail.com

Letter No. 1328 Date: 17.04.2026

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING Through GePNIC
e_Procurement Notice

1 Name of the work : **Road works for the Year 2025-2026 & Bridge works for the Year 2024-2025 (Total Six (06) Nos of Works)**
2 Class of contractor : **"B" Class, "A" Class & "Spl" Class of (Odisha PWD) or relevant class of other licensing authority.**
3 Estimated Cost : **Varies from Rs. 298.00 Lakhs to Rs. 888.78 Lakhs (Approximately)**
4 Details projects : As per Annexure attached.

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender online for bidding From	To	Last Date & Time of seeking tender clarification	Date & Time of opening of tender Technical Bid	Financial Bids
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Rayagada	NCB-01/ RWCRGDA/ 2026-2027	Dt. 30.04.2026 at 11.00 A.M.	Dt.19.05.2026 Up to 5.00 P.M.	Dt.18.05.2026 Up to 5.00 P.M.	Dt.20.05.2026 at 11.00 A.M.	Will be intimated later

5. The details of works can be seen from the website **https://www.tendersorissa.gov.in**
6. Any Corrigendum/Addendum will be displayed in the above e-tender web site.

Sd/-
Chief Construction Engineer, RW Circle, Rayagada
OIPR-25001/25196/1/26-27/0001

महाराष्ट्र-राज्य पायाभुत सुविधा विकास महामंडळ मर्यादित
महाराष्ट्र शासनाचा उपक्रम
सीआयएन :- यू ४३९०० एमएच २०२३ एसजीसी ४१२९९२
पंजिकृत कार्यालय : बी-१३, १३ वा मजला, बक्तावर बिल्डिंग, नरिमन पॉईंट, मुंबई - ४०००२१.
ई-मेल - maha-infra@outlook.com

निविदा सूचना क्रमांक ०२ सन २०२६-२०२७ ई-निविदा (ऑनलाईन)

मुख्य अभियंता, महाराष्ट्र-राज्य पायाभुत सुविधा विकास महामंडळ मर्यादित, फोर्ट, मुंबई-०१ यांचेकडून महाराष्ट्र राज्य ई-निविदा प्रणालीव्दारे (ऑनलाईन) नोंदणीकृत आणि अनुभवी कंत्राटदारांकडून निविदा मागविण्यात येत आहे

अ. क्र.	कामाचे नाव	कामाची किंमत (रुपये मध्ये)
१.	नाशिक त्र्यंबकेश्वर सिंहस्थ कुंभमेळयासाठी त्र्यंबकेश्वर येथे दर्शन पथ टप्पा २ अंतर्गत दर्शन पथ-२ व घाट शाही मार्ग, शिवदर्शन पथाचे बांधकाम करणे.	२००,९५,८९,१२७/-
२.	नाशिक त्र्यंबकेश्वर सिंहस्थ कुंभमेळयासाठी त्र्यंबकेश्वर येथे दर्शन पथ टप्पा २ अंतर्गत पुरोहित संघ विधी ची इमारत व दुकाने व गार्डन डेव्हलपमेंट करणे	७४,८४,२०,५५०/-

(एकूण ०२ कामे)

ई-निविदा उपलब्ध कालावधी : दिनांक २७/०४/२०२६ सकाळी ११.०० पासून ते दिनांक ११/०५/२०२६ रोजी ५.०० पर्यंत
ई-निविदा पूर्व बैठक : दिनांक ०५/०५/२०२६ दुपारी १२.०० वाजता
ई-निविदा उघडणे (शक्य झाल्यास) : दिनांक १३/०५/२०२६ रोजी ११.०० वाजता
खालील संकेतस्थळावरून ई-निविदाची सर्व माहिती उपलब्ध आहे.

१. http://mahatenders.gov.in
(सदर निविदा सुचनेमध्ये काही बदल होत असल्यास वरील वेब साईटवर कळविण्यात येईल.)
२. मुख्य अभियंता, महाराष्ट्र-राज्य पायाभुत सुविधा विकास महामंडळ मर्यादित, फोर्ट, मुंबई कार्यालयातील सुचना फलकावर लावण्यात येईल.

जा.क्र.महापासुविम/मुअमु/निविदा/दर्शनपथ-२/१३७१/२०२६
मुख्य अभियंता यांचे कार्यालय,
महाराष्ट्र-राज्य पायाभुत सुविधा विकास महामंडळ मर्यादित,
फोर्ट, मुंबई
दिनांक- २३/०४/२०२६

स्वाक्षरी/-
अधीक्षक अभियंता,
म.रा.पायाभूत सुविधा महामंडळ मर्या. मुंबई

DGIPR/2026-2027/427

CHITTARANJAN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS

OPEN E-TENDER

The following **e-Tenders** can be accessed under the link **www.ireps.gov.in** Offers for such e-Tender can be submitted only electronically by accessing the link **www.ireps.gov.in → login → E-Tender Stores/Supply**. Vendors may also contact the following officials to obtain clarification regarding particular tender or IREPS related information if any, **Dy. CMM/HQ/CLW/ Chittaranjan, 9163340711** or **AMM/HQ, 9163340713** (For Notice No. A) & **Dy. CMM/M-II/CLW/ Chittaranjan, 9163340708** or **AMM/ M, 9163340706** (For Notice No. B). **Office Address:** Office of The PCMM/CLW/Chittaranjan.

[A] No. COS/CRJ/PUB/e-Tender/ 19/0162, Date: 21/04/2026. Sl. No.: [1]. Tender No.: 70261084. Brief Description of Item: Main Compressor with Mounting Accessories along with Motor (Wound with Corona Resistance Wire), Drg./Spec. (1) RDSO/2018/EL/Spec/0137 REV.0 (2) SPEC/E-10/3/09 (Motor) with Amendment No.-01 to 06 OR Latest. **[Warranty Period:** 30 Months after the date of delivery]. **Quantity: 1685.00 Set. Earnest Money Deposit (Rupees):** ₹ 50,00,000.00. **Tender Closing Date & Time (IST): 14/05/2026 at 11:00 AM.**

[B] No. COS/CRJ/PUB/e-Tender/ 19/0162, Date: 24/04/2026. Sl. No.: [1]. Tender No.: 75263842A. Brief Description of Item: 3D Adjustable 360-degree Rotational Modified Driver Seat for three phase locomotives as per Drg. No. 1211-01.131-001 Alt.-4 **[Warranty Period:** 30 Months after the date of delivery]. **Quantity : 775.00 Numbers. Earnest Money Deposit (Rupees):** ₹ **7,68,160.00. Tender Closing Date & Time (IST): 14/05/2026 at 11:00 AM.**

[PR4/332] PCMM/CLW/Chittaranjan

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Prof. B. N. Gowda Kodandarama Reddy
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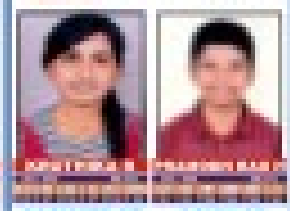
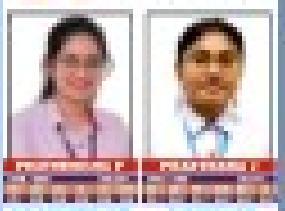
ASC INDEPENDENT PU COLLEGE

II PUC COMMERCE & SCIENCE RANK HOLDERS

MAR. 2023	MAR. 2024	MAR. 2025	MAR. 2026
39 STATE RANKS	51 STATE RANKS	34 STATE RANKS	47 STATE RANKS
COMMERCE STATE 2ND RANK	COMMERCE STATE 5TH RANK	COMMERCE STATE 1ST RANK	COMMERCE STATE 5TH RANK
SCIENCE STATE 9TH RANK	SCIENCE STATE 7TH RANK	SCIENCE STATE 6TH RANK	SCIENCE STATE 12TH RANK





47 STATE RANKS IN TOP 20 OF MARCH - 2026

ASC DEGREE COLLEGE

9 BANGALORE UNIVERSITY RANK HOLDERS

19 BANGALORE UNIVERSITY GOLD MEDALISTS

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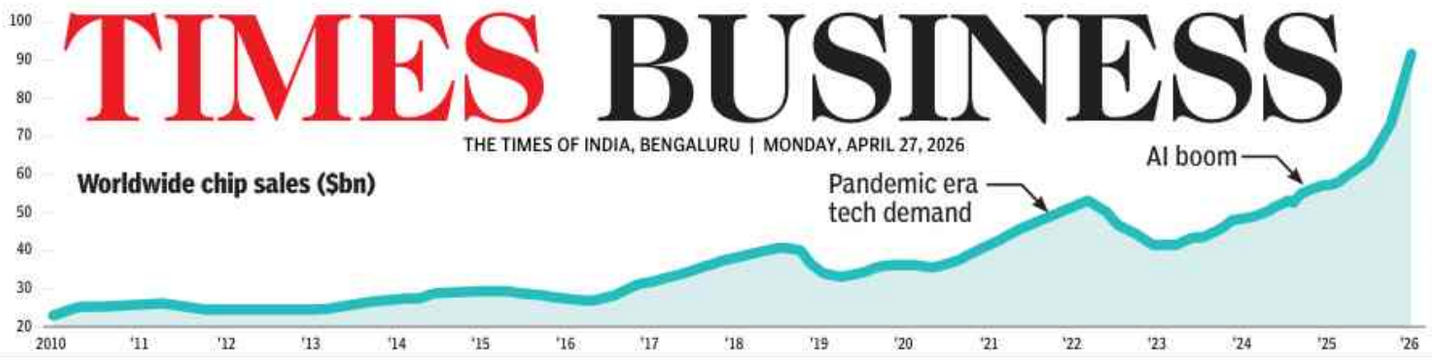
SECRETARY - ASC Educational & Cultural Trust

Dr. RAMAKRISHNA MURALI
CEO - ASC Group of Institutions

TIMES BUSINESS
THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2026

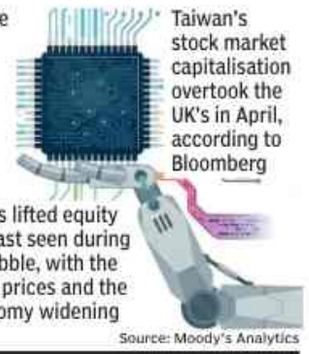
Across the Asia Pacific region, the AI boom has supercharged electronics shipments. Taiwan almost entirely cornered the windfall, with the world's dominant producer of advanced semiconductors enjoying surging exports and GDP. Its economy grew 8.7% in 2025, becoming APAC's fastest-growing economy that year



Prices across the range of electronics have surged, and isolated shortages in several hardware segments have disrupted consumer markets

Taiwan's stock market capitalisation overtook the UK's in April, according to Bloomberg

Investor euphoria has lifted equity valuations to levels last seen during the 1990s dotcom bubble, with the gap between market prices and the underlying real economy widening



Source: Moody's Analytics

Govt looks at relief measures for airlines as war continues

Likely To Approve ₹5k Cr Credit Line Guarantee Scheme

Saurabh.Sinha
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Govt is considering relief measures for airlines on multiple fronts, with no end in sight to the US-Iran war and airlines complaining of higher operating costs, along with drop in traffic. This week it could clear the way for a Rs 5,000 crore emergency credit line guarantee scheme (ECLGS), that may provide some wind in the sails of some drowning airlines.

The aviation ministry is trying to get the Hotan route in China cleared, that will give relief to Air India on its flights to the west, bypassing Pakistan and saving the loss-making airline millions by avoiding extra fuel burn on the longer route. Additionally, efforts are on to get some relief on jet fuel excise as base price is likely to remain high.

These moves come after the 25% reduction in landing and parking charges of all the 34 major airports for three months starting April 8 and the partial relief in jet fuel price hike for domestic flights for this month, which is sought to be extended to May also. The reason: Financially strong airlines have informed govt they will be forced to cut flights if some operating cost relief is not provided, leading to fewer flights and higher fares. And, weak ones may simply shut down, leading to unemployment and poorer connectivity.

To avoid that situation as the war rages on, these are the moves in the works:

POINTING TO HIGHER COSTS

- Airlines are pointing to higher operating costs, along with drop in traffic
- Carriers have informed govt that they will be forced to cut flights if some operating cost relief is not provided, leading to fewer flights and higher fares
- Aviation ministry is trying to get Hotan route in China cleared, that will give relief to Air India on flights to the West, bypassing Pakistan and saving millions by avoiding extra fuel cost
- AI has reduced its international flights by over 15% for now
- Efforts are on to get some relief on jet fuel excise

ECLGS: A Rs 5,000-crore ECLGS for airlines could be sent to the Cabinet for approval this week. A financially weak airline, for instance, has almost completely run out of funds and has not again been able to pay salaries, PF or TDS on time for some months now — a violation under the law. Continuing operations for this airline and some others in a similar state depends on getting emergency funding. "This will be subject to a limit of Rs 1,500 crore per airline," said ministry officials. While IndiGo, the only financially stable big airline, in terms of being able to generate revenues it needs, will be eligible for this scheme, they add "it might not need the same."

Hotan routing in China to bypass Pakistan: Air India has submitted the complete plan for its wide body Airbus A350s and Boeing 787-9s to bypass Pakistan airspace. The plan involves the flights to Europe, UK and the US from Delhi and Mumbai flying to Leh, then enter China and from Hotan turn left to Kyrgyzstan and then take the regular route to those places. Ditto on the way back. This route, AI has told govt, will free India from whims of Pakistan closing airspace. Taking a longer route due to closure of Pakistan airspace for almost a year now is leading to higher fuel burn, which at current fuel price levels and a weaker rupee are causing a dent to airlines, especially AI.

Ice creams, chocolates may cost you more as prices of raw materials rise

Asmita Dey@timesofindia.com

Mumbai: A cup of ice cream or an artisanal chocolate bar, sweet treats this summer, will pinch your pockets because the West Asia war has thrown supply chains in disarray.

For one, the US-Iran conflict is creating problems for companies. Prices of key ingredients, such as dry fruits and nuts, used to add flavour and make a range of ice creams and chocolates have gone up, squeezing margins of firms. Some of them are still refraining from taking price increases, amid peak business season. The cost of nuts and dry fruits has increased by about 15-22% over pre-war levels, said an industry executive. Rising logistics and packaging rates are adding to their cost pressures.

"Certain inputs like dry fruits and cocoa are seeing tightness (of supply) and longer lead times. Many such categories are dependent on imports and sea-route supply chains, including regions impacted by geopolitical situation," said Siddhant Kamath, director at Naturals Ice Cream, which has already taken a 10% price hike on an average across its portfolio to cope with high overall input costs.

Mother Dairy has taken selective price hikes in ice creams, driven by global commodity movements and higher logistics costs, said MD Jayatheertha Chary. Given the war started closer to the onset of the summer season, companies did not get enough room to make any adjustments to product recipes. Also, skimping on dry fruits and nuts would hit quality, said Zervin Rana, director of Dinshaw's Dairy Foods. "The primary impact is being felt on margins. As a result, there may be no alternative but to increase the MRPs of products," Rana said.

For Pascati Chocolates, cost of procuring hazelnuts has gone up by 75% year-on-year. Although hazelnuts are largely imported from Turkey, the war has led to broader regional instability and shipments now come by air, pushing up costs, said founder Devansh Ashar. "Thermocol box and packaging costs have also increased. Eventually, in the next month or so, we will have to increase the price of our hazelnut based chocolates and pass that on to the customer," said Ashar.

If fuel charges rise further, it will be another blow, said a spokesperson at Walko Food Company.

HIT BY WAR

- Cost of nuts and dry fruits has increased by about 15-22% over pre-war levels, says an industry executive
- Rising logistics and packaging rates are adding to cost pressures
- Mother Dairy has taken selective price hikes in ice creams

'West Asia situation, crude to drive mkts'

New Delhi: The geopolitical situation in West Asia, particularly developments around the Strait of Hormuz, Q4 earnings and crude prices are major factors to drive sentiments in stock market in a holiday-shortened week ahead, analysts said. AGENCIES

India's domestic consumption strongest shield against global shocks: Sitharaman

Industry Titans Say Self Reliance, Green Energy & Human Capital Key For Resilience

Mumbai: As global supply chains brace for the ripple effects of the ongoing West Asia conflict, India's top policymakers and corporate titans are looking inward to fortify the country's economic defences.

At the 26th Economic Times Awards for Corporate Excellence, a unified vision emerged: India's vast domestic market, coupled with strategic self-reliance and a demographic dividend, is its ultimate shield against international disruption. Rather than merely weathering the storm, the country's leadership is framing this geopolitical volatility as an urgent catalyst to accelerate domestic manufacturing, transition to green energy, and realise the untapped potential of the Indian workforce.

For finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman, the primary bulwark against external shocks lies in the sheer scale of the Indian consumer base and the untapped potential for import substitution.

Deloitte.
THE ECONOMIC TIMES AWARDS
FOR CORPORATE EXCELLENCE

She identified the internal market as India's greatest defence, noting, "The Indian population and its consumption, essentially your domestic consumption, is what is giving you that shock-absorbing capacity. As long as we are not failing in keeping our consumption boosted and well supported, we can be sure to weather the storm. That I would think is the biggest support we have for our economy."

To truly exploit this, she challenged the Indian industry to step up and capture the domestic demand currently met by foreign markets. "Businesses are importing a lot of goods which are intermediary, so there is some more agility which I expect from the Indian industry."

Saturday evening brought together a power-packed mix of industry leaders spanning new-age startups and centuries-old businesses, alongside financiers and policymakers, at one of the country's oldest business awards—instituted in 1998—with N Chandrababu Naidu among the rare early winners to repeat his achievement this year.

Naidu, once again the chief minister of Andhra Pradesh, emphasised that reducing dependence on volatile regions like West Asia requires a massive, cost-effective pivot to renewables. Connecting energy independence to national prosperity, he stated, "Ultimately we need energy to run anything, be it factory or vehicle or lighting. Now that is where I am working. Cost-effective energy sector... Our Prime Minister has announced 500 GW green energy by 2030. In that Andhra Pradesh is going to contribute 160 GW... The future is totally green energy."

Echoing this urgency for energy sovereignty, Sajjan Jindal, chairman and MD of the JSW Group, warned that a nation of India's size cannot afford to leave its economic engine at the mercy of disrupted international trade routes. He championed a radical shift in daily energy consumption to create a resilient domestic buffer, arguing, "I have a different perspective on this war. Today the world is not the same... we, as a large country like India, cannot depend on, oh, the ship has left, and my dinner will be cooked or restaurants will be running because LPG is coming. So what we need to do very quickly is rely on our own energy sources. We have solar, wind, coal, and nuclear. These are the four real energy sources that we have. So we must, as a country, make ourselves truly 'atmanirbhar' by using our own energy sources."

CORPORATE CHAMPIONS: (Left to right) Bharti Airtel MD and CEO Shashwat Sharma, JSW Group chairman & MD Sajjan Jindal, YouTube India country MD Gunjan Soni, HDFC Life MD & CEO Vibha Padalkar, Andhra Pradesh chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu, RateGain Travel Technologies founder & MD Bhanu Chopra, Serum Institute of India chairman & MD Cyrus Poonawalla, DLF director Pia Singh, Groww co-founder & CEO Lalit Keshre, and Asian Paints CFO R J Jeyamurugan

THE WINNERS

BUSINESS LEADER OF THE YEAR	Sajjan Jindal
BUSINESS REFORMER OF THE YEAR	N. Chandrababu Naidu
LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD	Cyrus Poonawalla
LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD	Kushal Pal Singh
BUSINESSWOMAN OF THE YEAR	Vibha Padalkar
ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR	Lalit Keshre
GLOBAL INDIAN OF THE YEAR	Neal Mohan
COMPANY OF THE YEAR	Bharti Airtel
EMERGING COMPANY OF THE YEAR	RateGain Travel Tech
CONSCIOUS CORPORATE OF THE YEAR	Asian Paints

Beyond consumption and energy, India's human capital remains a critical domestic asset capable of overcoming global technological and economic shifts. Arundhati Bhattacharya, president and CEO of Salesforce South Asia, pointed out that exploiting domestic opportunities requires an aggressively upskilled workforce ready to take on the new roles created by disruption. She highlighted this intrinsic advantage, noting, "India basically is blessed in the fact that it has a very deep pool of young professionals who are very easy to train and very quick to learn. And the other good thing that I see in our workforce is the hunger, the hunger to really excel... it's a question of ensuring that you are up to date with your skills."

While leaders look to long-term structural buffers, they are also tactically managing the immediate fallout of global conflicts. Anish Shah, group CEO and MD of Mahindra Group, provided a pragmatic view from the front lines of global manufacturing, confirming that while the West Asia crisis demands agility, India's robust demand and diversified sourcing are holding strong. "The challenges today are essentially to do with supply chains. And what we've seen is so far it's good," he explained, adding, "From a supply chain standpoint, what worries us most is about helium impacting semiconductors that will impact multiple industries, not just for India, but across the world. For most other things, we've had the ability to source from various different places. So I would just say it's caused a lot of scrambling for our teams, but from a net impact standpoint, very minimal. We're not seeing an impact on demand either at this point. So the Indian economy is on a strong footing." Winners at the ET Awards collectively framed their achievements as a reflection of India's structural rise, powered by policy support, digital infrastructure, and a growing emphasis on self-reliance. Chandrababu Naidu struck an optimistic note on India's trajectory, asserting that "India will be number one" and calling for a shift from ease to the "speed of business."

Industry veterans and global leaders placed India's growth within a broader nation-building and global context. Sajjan Jindal, chairman and MD, JSW Group, said, "It has never felt like business to me. It has always felt like participation in India's story," while KP Singh, chairman emeritus, DLF, argued that India needs a "quantum leap" in urbanisation to become the third-largest economy.

Cyrus Poonawalla, chairman, Serum Institute, traced his journey from making "industrial India self-sufficient" to positioning the country as the pharmacy of the world. Emerging entrepreneur Bhanu Chopra, founder of RateGain Travel Technologies, highlighted the global footprint of Indian innovation, noting his platform is "made in India," while YouTube CEO Neil Mohan said India has moved from keeping pace with the world to "setting the current," becoming a global "creator nation" exporting culture worldwide. Shashwat Sharma of Bharti Airtel described the company's journey as one rooted in doing right by "our customers and our people," helping build a seamlessly connected nation.

Lalit Keshre, co-founder and CEO of Groww, credited "progressive regulations and digital public infrastructure" for enabling scale, while Vibha Padalkar, MD, HDFC Life, linked India's development ambitions to financial security, saying, "we cannot become Viksit Bharat without having strong foundation of insurance for all by 2047."

Ultimately, the consensus is that surviving global turbulence requires an offensive, not just defensive, posture. Romal Shetty, CEO of Deloitte South Asia, captured this sentiment perfectly. "India has navigated a world that has moved from one crisis to another. From the COVID pandemic to the Russia-Ukraine conflict to Gaza and now Iran. Through each phase, India has shown resilience, anchored in a strong macroeconomic foundation and an increasingly anti-fragile structure," he observed. Summarising the collective mission to build a fortified, self-reliant economy, he concluded, "The question is not whether disruption comes, it's how fast you respond... India did not just get lucky. The world got complicated. We were ready... As we move towards Viksit Bharat 2047, we must understand that the journey is not a govt promise. It is a private sector assignment."

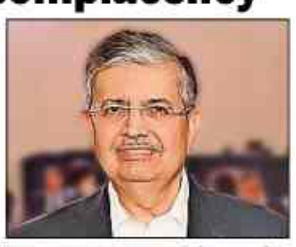
'No room for complacency'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: Veteran banker Uday Kotak cautioned that India's foreign exchange reserves remain strong but leave "very little room for complacency", as large foreign capital flows expose the economy to risks from global volatility.

At the ET Awards, Kotak said India has received around $1.5 trillion in foreign capital through FPI and FDI, which creates vulnerability if investors pull out during periods of uncertainty. He said the country currently holds around $700 billion in reserves, including gold and SDR, which is stronger than in previous decades but may not be sufficient to absorb large outflows. "Reserves are comfortable, but not something which we can take for granted," Kotak said.

Kotak said if crude sustains between $90 and $100 a barrel, India's current account deficit could widen from around 1% of GDP to 2.5%, requiring financing of around $150 billion annually.



TAKING ACCOUNT: Uday Kotak

TOI IN THE CLASSROOM

A Look At How Investors Can Plan Withdrawals From MF Portfolios

Investors with a sizeable mutual fund corpus and seeking steady income often face a key question: should they book profits in one go or opt for a systematic withdrawal plan. A look at how to choose withdrawal routes

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Mutual Fund investments are subject to market risks, read all scheme related documents carefully.

Ways To Generate Cash Flow From MFs

Financial planners say there are two broad approaches. One is valuation-based, where investors redeem or book profits when markets appear expensive and then use or redeploy the proceeds. The other is to set up a systematic withdrawal plan (SWP), which allows investors to withdraw a fixed amount at regular intervals, typically on a predefined date each month. To meet this payout, the fund house redeems the required number of units based on the prevailing NAV, while the remaining corpus continues to stay invested.

Which Method Should One Choose?

Wealth managers say investors with a strong grasp of valuations can time lump-sum withdrawals when markets are rich, and park proceeds in liquid or ultra-short-term funds for periodic use. However, most retail investors may find it difficult to time markets. For them, SWPs offer a more disciplined approach, allowing them to withdraw a fixed amount at regular intervals without disrupting long-term compounding.

Schemes Investors Must Use For SWPs?

While SWPs can be set up from any mutual fund, financial planners typically recommend a mix of large-cap equity funds and relatively low-volatility hybrid funds such as balanced advantage funds, multiasset allocation funds and aggressive hybrid funds.

Advantages Of SWPs

SWPs offer flexibility as investors can start, modify or stop withdrawals based on their needs. From a tax perspective, SWPs are treated as redemptions, and only the capital gains portion of each withdrawal is taxed. For equity-oriented funds, gains on units held for more than 12 months are taxed at 12.5% for amounts exceeding ₹1.25 lakh in a financial year. Gains on units held for less than 12 months are taxed at 20%. This can be more tax-efficient than fixed deposits or dividends, where the entire income is taxed at the investor's slab rate.

— PRASHANT MAHESH

AI-led reset hits BFSI; LTM sees gradual recovery

Veen.Mani@timesofindia.com

Bengaluru: LTM CEO **Venu Lambu** said the BFSI weakness was concentrated in a top client that is among the earliest adopters of AI-led transformation. Its top banking and financial services (BFSI) account recorded a sharper sequential decline of 4.9% in the March quarter, driven by a planned productivity reset. Management suggested the business has likely bottomed out but expects a gradual recovery.

He explained that large BFSI customers are at the forefront of testing new technologies and are therefore the first to see productivity-led changes in spending patterns. His message was that this is not a structural demand problem but part of the same cycle LTI-Mindtree has already seen in technology clients: early AI adoption creates short-term disruption as productivity benefits are implemented, but growth can recover once the transition stabilises. "AI productivity deals align with how AI is implemented—it's not about front-loading benefits," Lambu said, adding that clients see immediate gains only when solutions are deployed through pre-built platforms like BlueVerse.

The company posted $1.2 billion revenue in the March quarter, showing 1.2% sequential growth in both reported and constant currency terms. Annually, revenue grew 8.1% in dollar terms and 7% in constant currency. The company reported dollar revenue of $4.7 billion, growing 6% year-on-year in reported terms and 5.3% in constant currency. FY26 margins improved by about 90 basis points year-on-year to 15.4%, supported by cost optimisation programmes, while for the March quarter declined roughly 100 basis points sequentially due to wage hikes and productivity commitments.

"It's important that we transform while we continue to perform... short-term headwinds will become long-term tailwinds," Lambu said. AI is also reshaping pricing models. Traditional services are seeing "a new price point," while large deals initially come with lower margins due to upfront investments in delivery transformation. However, firms expect to improve profitability over time as efficiencies kick in. On talent, the company continues to invest in freshers trained for an AI-first environment.

'New Zealand trade deal to provide huge opportunities'

Agra: The free trade agreement (FTA) with New Zealand, scheduled to be signed on April 27, will provide huge opportunities for domestic firms, including leather exporters from the city of the Taj Mahal, Union commerce and industry minister **Piyush Goyal** said Sunday.

Goyal is here with the visiting New Zealand's trade and investment minister Todd McClay. The ministers held discussions with businesses from different sectors, including leather and sports goods.

The FTA aims to double bilateral trade and facilitate duty-free access to the island nation's markets for Indian companies, as well as bring in $20 billion of investment over the next 15 years. "Goods exported from India to New Zealand will go without any tax, creating significant opportunities, including for Agra's leather industry and other sectors," Goyal said, adding that the pact would help promote two-way commerce, which stood around $2.4 billion.

Goyal will hold a meeting with representatives of export promotion councils and industry associations on Monday to discuss ways to boost the outbound shipments, an official said. The meeting will be held after India and New Zealand sign the free trade pact. AGENCIES

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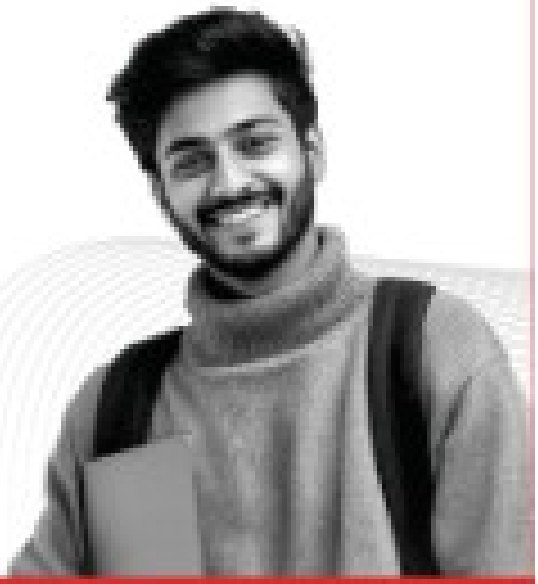

PROGRAMMES OFFERED IN

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CONTRAPUNTO

The amount of actual political violence that has occurred is nowhere near what it was in the 1960s

– LILLIANA MASON, political scientist

The Bullet Point

Thankfully, the gunman couldn't get to Trump. Worryingly, political violence is getting to America

Republican Abraham Lincoln (1865) to Democrat John F Kennedy (1963), four US presidents have been assassinated while in office. But a 2007 Congressional Research Service report documented that actually there had been direct assaults on 10 of the 42 persons who had served in this office, until then. A broader definition, including credible plots foiled before execution, or threats serious enough to trigger Secret Service investigations, would put the number of assassination attempts at well over 30. So, when, after surviving a third such attack in two years, Trump said that his is a "dangerous profession", he was being bleakly, highly factful.

Still, a distinction should be made between America's legacy of political violence, and the political currents feeding it today. After all, the country born out of revolutionary conflict, interrupted by a bloody civil war, the 1960s social unrest…is not experiencing present violence as simply a historic feature of the system. Instead, there is a sense of alarm. Whether it is the man who shot dead Charlie Kirk, or the one who fractured Nancy Pelosi's husband's skull with a hammer, these actions are being experienced by Americans as shocking, even cataclysmic. But also, most importantly, as systemic, as if *something* has happened to their country. This suggests that political rhetoric has outpaced the violence.

Such is the dehumanisation of political opponents, so vicious is the polarisation, that a feeling of civil war is near-omnipresent in society. Whether institutions and culture can recalibrate before real violence spreads, and peace is truly shattered, is arguably the central national question about the Trump era. And it doesn't cleave to party lines. As the open-source Prosecution Project, tracking US felony criminal cases involving illegal political violence since 1990, underlines, neither the left nor the right, the religious or irreligious, have a monopoly on this hobby.

CNN's Wolf Blitzer was scarily close to "Shot Fired!" – at the White House Correspondents' Dinner on Saturday night. But as someone who has been to 30 such dinners over the decades, he also said this one had the kind of security he's never seen before. Securitymaxxing is one way for a society to go. But another, better, way is reducing the oxygen for radicalisation. Elite cues strongly shape what supporters see as acceptable. Plus, it's on them to tackle the real grievance drivers, such as economic insecurity. A lot of human beings unstably carry violence inside them. But any country in which politics incites them to aim it towards political targets, should correct course. Or, things can always get worse.

Pied Paper

Govts are recognising newspapers can nourish young minds. But parents have to do their bit

Karnataka's recent directive asking schools to begin the day with newspaper reading echoes a sensible idea whose time has returned. As we noted earlier (*https://bitly.cx/pweSP*), reading does more than fill time, it chisels the mind. It sharpens comprehension, strengthens memory pathways, and nudges young brains towards deeper, conceptual thinking. A newspaper adds another layer to this discipline. It is a daily window into the world, compact yet expansive, offering students a guided tour through events, ideas, and realities that shape their lives. Cultivated early, this habit enriches language skills, broadens awareness, and steadies attention in an age of distraction.

That steadying influence is urgently needed. Today's children swim in a relentless digital current, where doomscrolling and social media excess, have been linked to rising anxiety, depression, and fractured sleep cycles. Sleep, the quiet architect of growth, often becomes collateral damage. It is no coincidence that countries like Australia, Denmark, and France are tightening access to social media for younger users. Yet restriction alone is a blunt tool. A more elegant solution lies in substitution: replace passive scrolling with active reading. Newspapers, with their rhythm and reliability, can anchor that shift. They also serve as a safeguard in an era where algorithms often amplify noise over truth. Unlike the chaotic churn of forwards and feeds, newspapers are built on reporting, scrutiny, and editorial judgement. They teach children not just what to think about, but how to think.

Still, policy can only open the door. Habit walks in when it sees itself mirrored at home. If parents are glued to screens, the newspaper becomes ornamental. For this effort to take root, teachers and parents must act in concert, not as enforcers, but as examples. A child who sees reading, will read. And in that quiet daily ritual lies the blueprint for a more thoughtful, grounded society.

Without reservation

Nari Shakti moonwalking in Mumbai

Anil Abraham

The males of the species were seated on sofas, discussing Hormuz Strait and IPL scores. The ladies were in a cluster, in another corner of the living room, chatting about LPG cylinders and Akshaya Tritiya. It was a typical Indian party, with a visible gender divide, passed down faithfully for generations. Kamala was glaring at me meaningfully, indicating that it was time for radical social change.

She tucked her Kanjeevaram sari firmly, and then plonked herself on a beanbag, right in the midst of the men's circle. For a moment there was shocked silence, punctuated by a nervous giggle from Mr Sharma. Kamala had symbolically crossed the line that men had drawn at patriarchal parties, and had breached the last male bastion. To paraphrase Neil Armstrong, she had taken a small step for a woman but a giant leap for mankind.

The cliché about men being from Mars and women from Venus should have been relegated to history, after the likes of Sunita Williams and Christina Koch boldly went where no woman has gone before. Glass ceilings were being broken with impunity, and boardrooms were being bombarded with both EQ and IQ. Yet, these changes were not filtering down to the ordinary Indian home.

Yes, on Mumbai roads, a lone woman could be seen fearlessly challenging authority, in a vibrant reel of real Nari Shakti. She had stepped over craters to make her voice heard, clearly. Yes, women had been promised the moon – gender parity and safety at the workplace. But the reality was that while becoming independent working women, they were still moonlighting as mothers, wives, daughters, sisters…

"So tell me, was the first moon landing fake?" Kamala asked, as she reached for a slice of pepperoni pizza. The men joined in with their conspiracy theories, and went to the dark side of the moon. The movie *Michael* popped up in conversation, and his legendary moonwalk was next. The animated discussion proceeded towards politics, propaganda, and peace-talks. "Maybe if we had more women leaders, they would govern more and tweet less!" Kamala added pointedly. She was over the moon that her gentle attempt at breaking barriers, had unleashed Nari Shakti in the Indian living room conversations. I agreed with her, without any reservation.

What Now In US Politics?

Post-shooting, Trump will get a ratings bump. Question is whether he will squander it by doubling down on the Iran war, misreading public mood again

Patrick Basham

Columnist based in Washington DC

Only one thing is guaranteed, after the attempted shooting of Trump at Saturday night's White House Correspondents' Dinner. The attempts to exploit this event for partisan gain, will succeed. Such success will not occur because the partisan practitioners are so skilled in the dark political arts. Rather, they will succeed because across America there is a terrifying appetite for political violence.

Our Sept 2025 Democracy Institute poll for Australia's Network 10 News+, found alarming levels of support for political violence. Six in ten American voters hate some people simply because they hold different political views. In partisan terms, a majority (51%) of Democratic voters and a large minority (39%) of Republican voters feel this way.

One in five voters told us that violence is sometimes justified, to achieve one's political goals. A majority (53%) of voters predicted that there would be political assassinations during Trump's second term. Two-thirds of Republican voters, 47% of Democratic voters, and 50% of Independents held this view.

So, partisan divisions and political polarisation are likely to be exacerbated, because they exist in such fertile soil. Both sides of America's political divide will blame each other for the latest attempt, at a political assassination of a major political figure.

Democrats will say that Trump's recent barbaric calls to destroy Iran's civilisation, and to bomb the Iranian people back to the Stone Age, in concert with his acquiescence to Israel's alleged genocide against the Palestinian people in Gaza, were the final straw. They will argue that his incendiary rhetoric has produced an indefensible, if understandable, violent reaction among a small number of the very large number of Americans desperate for calm, civilised political leadership.

Republicans, on the other hand, will portray the incident as yet another example of a young left-wing activist radicalised by mainstream media, and Democratic Party propaganda, to hate Trump, and to see him as the cause of all of their own, and America's, problems.

Larger, related, still-unanswered political questions and hypotheses will draw in additional political oxygen.

Since the assassination attempt on Trump in Butler, Pennsylvania, on the eve of the Republican Party's presidential nominating convention in July 2024, and again in Florida in Sept 2024, right-wing social media has remained full of hypotheses, theories, arguments, and conspiracies about repeated lapses in security surrounding Trump. These gathered further strength from the assassination of leading conservative activist and podcaster, Charlie Kirk, in Utah last Sept.

And now, there are questions about lax security at the White House Correspondents' Dinner. Entry into the venue, Washington Hilton, seems to have been a breeze. Only a perfunctory "do you have a copy of your invitation?" check seems to have been enough to enter the actual event. All this feeds justifiable concerns – or political paranoia, depending upon one's perspective – that so-called Deep State actors within the American political system, continue to conspire to try to murder Trump, and his most vocal and visible surrogates.

Imaged by AI, from a Photograph

What are the electoral ramifications of such doubts? It is likely that this latest attempt will produce at least a short-term increase in support for Trump, himself. But such a political 'rally around Trump' will not be a nationwide or bipartisan wave.

Rather, a fair number of those voters who have recently drifted away from Trump because of the Iran war, Epstein files, and the economy, will be signalling their opposition to political violence by voicing support for the president. Some of these are formerly self-described MAGA voters. Most are self-described America First and MAHA (Make America Healthy Again) voters. Many are former Independents, or non-voters, or racial and ethnic minority voters who formed sizeable and crucial components of Trump's winning coalition in 2024.

The return of some Republican and Independent voters to Trump's fold will set the Trump presidency, and more specifically, its policymaking, along one of two paths.

Along the first path, Trump may continue the movement away from extended and deeper conflict with Iran. If he chooses this path, the temporary return of some 2024 voters to his fold may have the effect of firming up Republican turnout in the Nov midterm election. In this scenario, it is still likely that Democrats take back control of Congress, as Republicans probably would still lose enough congressional races to lose their House of Representatives majority. But, Democrats may secure a Senate majority by only a couple of seats.

However, if Trump, emboldened by a temporarily rebuilt coalition, decides to double down on the Iranian conflict, it is probable the heavy economic and humanitarian fallout will produce renewed erosion of Trump's approval ratings, depressed Republican turnout, and a much heavier election defeat.

An irony of any tragic or unnerving event is the unexpected reputational gains that accrue to those seen to perform well during a crisis. Think Trump's "Fight! Fight! Fight!" response in Pennsylvania. Now, enter Robert F Kennedy, Jr.

In terms of delivering for his MAHA base in policy terms, and improving his public image, Kennedy has been one of the few stars of Trump's second term. Now, the photo of him sitting tall at his table, not cowering amidst the sound of bullets, while those sitting with him ducked for cover, will become an iconic image of this particular Kennedy seemingly calm under fire. It may become the image that defines his tenure in the Trump administration, and it may be the visual cue for a future gubernatorial or senatorial bid.

Today, American politics is even worse off than yesterday. Assuming it will improve tomorrow requires, sadly, the triumph of hope over experience.

The writer is director, Democracy Institute, US

Mind The Real Sikh Aspirations In Punjab

We should not view the state through a 'Khalistan' prism. This is a diaspora obsession, which does complicate India's international relations, but has little to do with improving livelihoods locally

Sachida Nand Jha

The recent resurgence of debate around Sikh separatism, both at home and among the diaspora, has cast a fresh shadow on India's social and political fabric. The evocative word 'Khalistan', once synonymous with the bloodshed and turmoil of Punjab in the 1980s, is again at the fore – sometimes as rhetoric from overseas activists, sometimes as a convenient political tool, but rarely as an actual demand amongst the majority of Sikhs in India.

As Rajesh Singh notes in his detailed account, *Sikh Separatism: A History of Conflicts*, separating fact from fiction is crucial in such volatile debates. The Khalistan movement, while deeply traumatic in India's recent history, was never the unanimous or even dominant desire of Punjab's Sikh population. Its story is entangled in colonial manipulations, growing pains of a fledgling nation, and the frustrated aspirations of a vibrant community, which expected a greater sense of security and dignity from independent India.

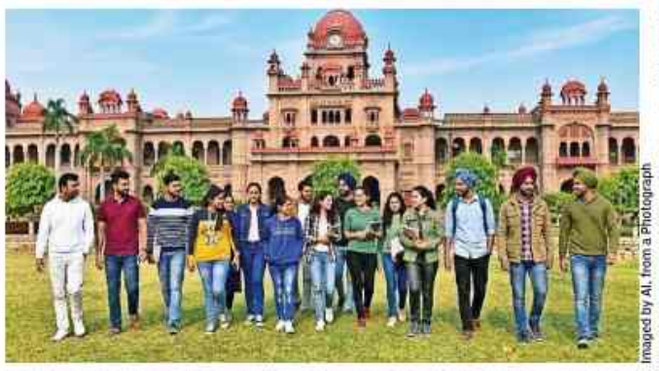
Origins of Sikh separatism predate independent India. The British, masters of 'divide and rule', accentuated religious differences to consolidate power, planting seeds of identity politics that outlasted colonialism.

After Independence, the reorganisation of states and the movement for Punjabi Suba, which established Punjab as a Sikh-majority state in 1966, failed to fully address the peculiar anxieties and identity concerns of many Sikhs. Arguments over language, religion, and representation lingered on, often fuelled by political opportunism from all quarters.

Crucially, the escalation of the movement in the late 1970s and 1980s stemmed as much from real grievances, as from manipulation. Political missteps in Delhi, local leadership's inability to engage frustrated youth, and foreign interference all coalesced to create a perfect storm. Leaders like Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale came to dominate the conversation, steering it from questions of identity and rights to confrontation and, ultimately, secession. The tragic episodes of Operation Blue Star in 1984 and the brutal anti-Sikh riots that followed, marked the nadir of Sikh-State relations, legitimising in the eyes of some the sense of 'otherness' that separatists thrived upon.

And yet, as Singh's scholarship makes clear, most Sikhs – even amidst the chaos – did not waver in their attachment to India. Surveys, personal testimonies, and voting patterns alike reveal a community seeking redress, not rupture.

While extremist violence and state excesses both scarred Punjab deeply, separatism never assumed the mantle of a people's movement within the state. Rather, it morphed into a cause célèbre among sections of the diaspora, particularly in Canada and UK, where political conditions and nostalgia allowed for fiery advocacy largely detached from the ground realities of Indian Punjab.



Imaged by AI, from a Photograph

This diaspora-driven Khalistan narrative, energetic and often unaccountable, complicates India's international relations to this day. Western govts may frame this as free expression, but for India these are not abstract slogans: they evoke the pain of lost lives, social division, and a struggle that the majority of Sikhs never espoused.

Present-day Punjab tells a different story. Youth of the state, battered by unemployment and agrarian distress, aspire for better education, jobs, and a secure future. Khalistan is, for most, a relic of the past, or a bogey invoked for ideological or political currency. The real challenge today is delivering opportunity and justice – not revisiting old wounds under the garb of separatism.

Yet, ignoring continued vulnerabilities would be a grave mistake. The legacy of 1984 and unresolved claims of justice, remain open wounds. Distrust, stoked by both domestic politics and external actors, can flare if not addressed through meaningful engagement and reassurance. As Singh rightly observes, it is crucial for policymakers to distinguish legitimate grievances from the separatist fringe, and not to conflate Sikh aspirations with sedition.

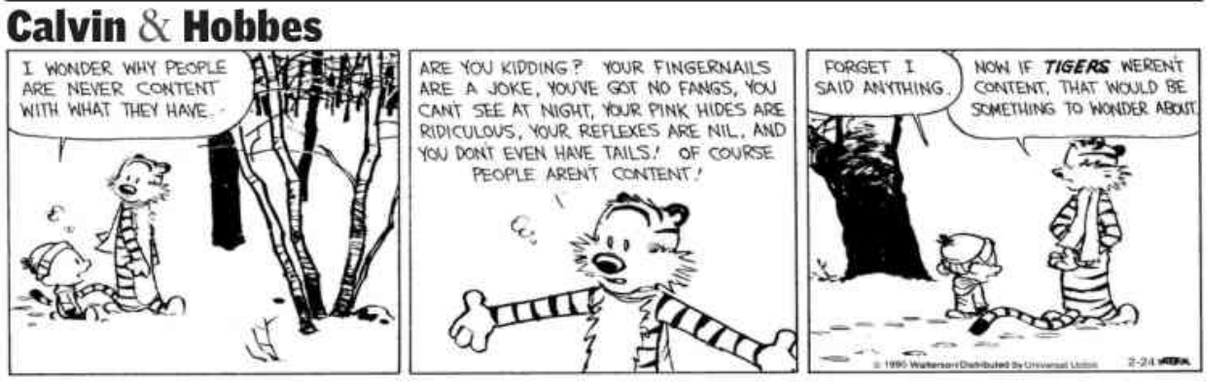
For Western nations hosting large Sikh communities, a nuanced approach is needed. Championing free speech cannot mean providing a shield to incitement of violence, or disregard for another nation's sovereignty. For India itself, reconciliation with history and proactive integration – including memorialising past injustices and celebrating Sikh achievements – remains the surest path to harmony.

In truth, Sikh separatism in today's India is more a matter of myth and memory than of mass mobilisation. The Khalistan issue endures as a reminder of India's need to honour diversity, address injustice, and nurture unity. The Sikh experience is a vital thread in the fabric of modern India – resilient, proud, and inseparably woven into the nation's story.

The true answer lies not in separation, but in a deeper, more honest integration. History counsels vigilance – but above all, compassion – forging a future worthy of the sacrifices and dreams of India's Sikhs and, indeed, of India itself.

The writer teaches English at Rajdhani College, University of Delhi

Calvin & Hobbes


I WONDER WHY PEOPLE ARE NEVER CONTENT WITH WHAT THEY HAVE.
ARE YOU KIDDING? YOUR FINGERNAILS ARE A JOKE, YOU'VE GOT NO FANGS, YOU CAN'T SEE AT NIGHT, YOUR PINK HIDES ARE RIDICULOUS, YOUR REFLEXES ARE NIL, AND YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE TAILS! OF COURSE PEOPLE AREN'T CONTENT!
FORGET I SAID ANYTHING.
NOW IF TIGERS WEREN'T CONTENT, THAT WOULD BE SOMETHING TO WONDER ABOUT.

Sacred*space*

The higher man is distinguished from the lower by his fearlessness and his readiness to challenge misfortune.

Friedrich Nietzsche

We Are Not The Last Step In Terrestrial Evolution

Meena Om

Renunciation is required to be centred in the inner, true being, detached from all expectations, desires and aspirations, which can culminate in a feeling of separation. To experience oneness, consciousness needs to be expanded to the state in which it merges with the Supreme. Oneness propels an individual towards a feeling of love that diminishes all conflicts, and one becomes anchored in peace and bliss.

Truth and realisation of the Supreme Entity – tattve, true enlightenment – happen when one attains the state of non-attachment and is free of all longings and wants. In this absolute awareness, our whole being is guided by the Supreme Intelligence.

Evolution is propelling humans towards unified thinking and collective consciousness, fostering a sense of oneness. Every thoughtful person should aspire to be a real human as they are meant to be. First of all, one must be out of the feeling of 'i, me, mine'. We must realise the connection between all matter, being, nature and cosmos…there is no void or vacuum. The globalisation and expansion of materialistic thought now need to be redirected from the outside to the innermost spaces of being. We have been consumed by materialistic thoughts and commodities, but now the focus must shift to our brain, heart, and soul energies. We need to learn to communicate, feel and understand how to go inwards and relate to the subtle language, signs or signals of the brain, heart, and soul – to utilise these powerful transmitting mediums bestowed to us for our growth and betterment of humanity.

All natural disasters and viral pandemics have shown how dependent we all are on each other for help and support. We are all connected to others with our thinking patterns, aspirations, visions, ideas, and goals. A new understanding of mutual accountability and an aspiration to feel connected are surfacing because all are part of the Supreme Being.

THE SPEAKING TREE

To realise and feel this truth, the transformation and evolution of consciousness is required. A strong aspiration for this transformation is the starting point. One has to be receptive by inner opening. Inner opening – to enter a transformed consciousness, where one starts relating to true *jnan*, not acquired information, which propels one to lose interest in things once desirable. This is just the beginning towards evolution. Transformation does not mean a change in individuality, or the gaining of siddhis or accomplishments; it is a reformed consciousness that propels one towards a higher state of being for true realisation and enlightenment. Realisation enhances the expansion of consciousness, thus expanding the aura. A step towards merging with Universal Consciousness.

It reflects that we are not the last step in terrestrial evolution. The present human consciousness is about to be replaced by a more expanded, new consciousness that will be governed by Supreme Intelligence, from where a new higher Being of Light race will usher in. The time has come for the radical change of consciousness that can deliver the world from its present ambiguity and darkness, ignorance. All activities of Nature are progressing towards Supreme Reality according to the Universal Mechanism.

We must be our true selves to realise and feel our hidden treasures, divine attributes and energies that relate to nothing less than the Supreme Reality and Truth.

Indian patents need multidisciplinary teams, not solo inventors

Stop using ChatGPT for task completion, start maximising for cognitive development

The invisible erosion of learning as students unknowingly use AI as a crutch, is undermining their growth by impacting their cognitive abilities, writes Poornima Ranjan

Treat AI as a core fluency rather than a niche subject

Re-entry hurdles, upskilling plans keep 60% women out of workforce

3 PMs, 3 rivers, a thousand books... and why, to her, Allahabad is a city of guavas

We live in cities. But cities also live in us. Sahitya Akademi award recipient **Mamta Kalia** tells **Avijit Ghosh** how Allahabad lives in her head and why its writing culture is different from Delhi's

Piyal Bhattacharjee

Mamta Kalia at her residence in Ghaziabad

You can leave a city, but does a city ever leave you? Can you discard it like books in a bedroom, or a suitcase on a highway? How does one ever leave a city that was part of your fecund summers, your fond youth? The city, writes Hindi litterateur Mamta Kalia, morphs into memory and flows in our veins, transforms into an ache and needles the heart, before settling down like a landscape in the theatre of our eyes.

Mamta is talking about Allahabad, which has now reverted to its older name, Prayagraj. "I have no quarrel with the name 'Prayagraj'. Many people visit the town only to take a dip in the Ganges at the Sangam. But for me, Allahabad has a vibe and a vibration. I feel more inspired by the name," says the writer, who recently received the Sahitya Akademi award for her memoir 'Jeete Ji Allahabad', which roughly translates to 'Alive in Allahabad'.

"Allahabad is a city of guavas. To fully enjoy the fruit, you eat the skin, the flesh and the seeds.

"I have no quarrel with the name 'Prayagraj'. Many people visit the town only to take a dip in the Ganges at the Sangam. But for me, 'Allahabad' has a vibe and a vibration. I feel more inspired by the name

To understand and appreciate a town, you must live there for a long time," says the 86-year-old author of acclaimed novels such as 'Beghar (Homeless)' and perceptive short stories like 'Pachees Saal Ki Ladki (The 25 year-old girl)'. Age hasn't dimmed either her ability to conjure up an apt simile or a sparkling turn of phrase — even in conversation. Sample this: "Sumitranandan Pant was soft-spoken and artistic-looking, just like his poetry."

Her reminiscences, though, are anything but gentle. Mamta lived in Allahabad for three decades starting 1970. Her book is an intimate love letter to the town, but also reads as an unfiltered and unsparing account of its literary and publishing circle.

Few cities have drawn such a wide range of reactions across centuries, as collated by poet Arvind Krishna Mehrotra in 'The Last Bungalow'. To recall a few, Chinese scholar Hiuen Tsang wrote about Prayag in the 7th century CE. Ralph Fitch, an English traveller in Akbar's time, talked about it. Urdu poet laureate Ghalib found the place hellish and wondered if it deserved to be called a city. Mark Twain detailed Allahabad in his travelogue, 'Following the Equator'.

The city was also a central figure in key moments of modern Indian history: an active participant in the 1857 revolt; an incubator of the 20th century national movement; the birthplace of first PM Jawaharlal Nehru; the electoral constituency of two PMs: Lal Bahadur Shastri and V P Singh; and the site of a high court ruling against Indira Gandhi, which led to the dreaded Emergency in 1975.

Allahabad's modern portions emerged from the needs of an expanding colonial state — the court, the printing press and the university were logical fallouts. Over time, the political prominence faded, and the university was more favoured by wannabe student politicians, rather than serious scholars. But the city endures in memoirs and memories.

Allahabad, Unfiltered

To most lovers of Hindi literature, Allahabad is the beating heart of iconic poems (Nirala's 'Woh Todti Pathar'), unforgettable novels (the first para of Dharamvir Bharti's 'Gunahon Ka Devta' is among the finest odes to any city), and seminal short stories (Gyanranjan's 'Ghanta', Ravindra Kaliya's 'Kala Register').

But just read some more names, slowly and aloud — Sumitranandan Pant, Mahadevi Verma, Amrit Rai, Sripat Rai, Harivansh Rai Bachchan, Upendranath Ashk, Bhairav Prasad Gupt, Markandey, Amarkant, Laxmikant Verma, Shekhar Joshi, Doodhnath Singh and, of course, Mamta herself — and you can hear the rolling thunder of a language's changing themes and evolving rhythms. As Gyanranjan recounted in 'Vagabond Nights', "To some extent, the history of modern Hindi literature begins in Allahabad."

And it only gets better when you add the biggies of Urdu: poet Akbar Allahabadi, who wrote 'Hungama Hai Kyun Barpa', the epochal Firaq Gorakhpuri, who taught English at Allahabad University, and the modernist Shamsur Rahman Faruqi. Not to forget that detective novelist Ibn-e-Safi was born near Allahabad and published his early works there.

It wasn't just what they wrote, but the subculture that was born out of it. Writers seemed to have formed an alternative version of how life could be lived as an everyday coffee house debate amidst ferocious creative output. And that's even though, for most, life was a struggle — for the next advance from the publisher, or the long wait for the rare cash award.

"This," says Mamta, "was a place where you learnt how to write in the face of criticism, where peers/seniors kept your ego in check."

Irreverence was integral to the culture. "University students would even challenge (top literary critic) Dr Namwar Singh. Someone would say, 'Namwar ji, that's not right, please update your reading'," she says.

Differing opinions generated debates. Tomes were penned to seal them. The book recalls the fight between the progressive writer, Bhairav Prasad Gupta, and Upendranath Ashk. Gupta wrote a novel on Ashk, 'Antim Adhyay (Last Chapter)' and Ashk replied with 'Chehre Anek (Many Faces)' years later. Ashk also wrote 'Manto Mera Dushman', recounting his fractious relationship with the Urdu writer in Bombay filmdom.

In a city of three rivers, including one invisible (Ganga, Yamuna and the mythical Saraswati), no creative idea was grand enough to go unchallenged by the argumentative Allahabadi. Hierarchies didn't matter. Neither did reputation. The book recounts that during the launch of Pant's book, 'Lokatayan', another writer, Vijayadev Narayan Sahi, said, "I have neither read 'Lokatayan', nor will read it." Pant replied, "*Aap na padhein. Aani wali peedhiyan mujhe padhengi* (You don't; future generations will.)"

Yet, this was a town where writers were stars. Gyanranjan, who passed away in Jan, once wrote how he would be "standing in front of Pant's house for a long time, rather in a way that people once waited in front of the film actress Suraiya's flat on Marine Drive, or today wait outside Amitabh Bachchan's bungalow in Juhu."

In Allahabad, writing and publishing went hand in hand. Mamta writes how the publishing press, Lok Bharti, and its co-owner, Dineshchandra, became cultural institutions. Many writers were also publishers, most of them unsuccessful. Mamta's husband, Ravindra Kaliya, later a major editor, also ran a press that published both emerging and established authors. So did the unconventional Ashk.

When Mamta and Ravindra arrived in Allahabad in 1970, the post-Nayi Kahani (new story) generation had taken charge. Writers such as Gyanranjan and Doodhnath Singh, among others, were fashioning new idioms and thematic concerns. Their language was caustic and cynical, in every sense the opposite of the earlier literary dons. "When the earlier generation wrote about the common people, they offered a window view, but the later generation gave a more lived-in experience of their lives," she says.

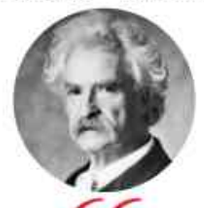
Largely, though, this was a man's world. Literary women, such as Mamta, who also taught and wrote, were rare. They mostly operated on the periphery. "Mine was an unusual household because I had an equal voice as well as independence," says Mamta, who also taught English and served as principal in the city's Mahila Seva Sadan Degree College.

Delhi Calling

Mamta, who was born in Vrindavan, had a taste of many cities. Her father's Akashvani job took the family to Delhi, Bombay, Poona, Nagpur and Indore. She experienced Delhi first in the early 60s as a student at Hindu College. Two chapters are dedicated to the capital in her collection of city-based reminiscences, 'Kitni Shehron Mein Kitni Baar'.

"Delhi was sincere and simpler then," she says. Her next stint in Delhi was from 2006-2014, when the family shuttled from one part of Lajpat Nagar to another. "There were so many shops selling clothes, electronics, and food, but not a single bookstore," she says with exasperation. "In Allahabad, Civil Lines and University Road had any number of bookstores and publishing houses those days."

After Independence, Delhi emerged as an official hub of literature and the arts. Institutions like Sahitya Akademi, Lalit Kala Akademi, Sangeet Kala Akademi and Doordarshan, among others, were set up in the national capital. Newspapers, magazines and leading universities, such as DU and JNU, attracted academics and the literary-oriented like moths to a flame. Some, like Kamleshwar, first shifted to Mumbai to make a name in Hindi cinema before moving to Delhi.



"It [Allahabad] is a town of wide avenues and noble distances, and is comely and alluring, and full of suggestions of comfort and leisure, and of the serenity which a good conscience buttressed by a sufficient bank account gives
—MARK TWAIN,
DESCRIBING 'THE ENGLISH PART OF THE CITY' IN 'FOLLOWING THE EQUATOR: A JOURNEY AROUND THE WORLD' (1897)

Mamta was struck by the stark contrast between the literary cultures of the two cities. "Delhi is a market; Allahabad is a workshop, where you learn to write. Delhi believes in distribution, marketing, advertisement, and publicity. Allahabad believes in creativity, introspection, retrospection," says the writer who now lives in an unfinished apartment complex in Ghaziabad.

In her view, the people, too, are different. In Allahabad, she says, ordinary people live with self-pride. "They have opinions and are not afraid to voice it. In Delhi, people avoid giving opinions. Even at coffee houses, I don't find people willing to share a table or thoughts. I feel lonelier when I go there."

But cities change with time. Delhi has, and so has Allahabad, which is now a half-cosmopolitan world in retreat. In 2002, Gyanranjan noted in 'Vagabond Nights' that "nobody comes to write in Allahabad anymore", and that "Allahabad is beginning to look more and more like any other town in eastern Uttar Pradesh.... It's neither a city nor a village, nor anything in between. There is no category in which to put it. It cannot go back to what it was, nor can it strike out a new path."

Two and a half decades have passed since then. But the truth, as Mamta's memoir tells us, is that cities also live in our heads, where the noise of old debates still ring in the ears and the coffee always smells of youth.

A street bookseller at his shop in Allahabad. Sahitya Akademi award winner Mamta Kalia says that between 2006 and 2014, when her family stayed in Delhi's Lajpat Nagar, she did not find a 'single bookstore'. She contrasts it with Allahabad, which, she says, had a number of bookstores and publishing houses

A CITY LIKE NO OTHER

3 PRIME MINISTERS
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CRADLE OF MODERN HINDI LITERATURE | Sumitranandan Pant, Mahadevi Verma, Harivansh Rai Bachchan, Suryakant Tripathi (Nirala)

A CULTURE OF FIERCE DEBATE | Writers challenged each other openly. No creative idea was grand enough to go unchallenged by the argumentative Allahabadi

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'Delhi is a market; Allahabad is a workshop, where you learn to write. Delhi believes in distribution, marketing, advertisement, and publicity. Allahabad believes in creativity, introspection, retrospection'

Court can reject pre-arrest bail but can't ask for surrender: SC

New Delhi: A court can reject anticipatory bail of an accused but it has no jurisdiction to direct him to surrender before the trial court, the Supreme Court has said.

A bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and Ujjal Bhuyan made the observation while hearing a plea filed by a man accused of cheating and forgery.

The Jharkhand high court had rejected anticipatory bail plea of the accused and asked him to surrender and seek regular bail.

In this case, a complaint had been filed before a magistrate alleging offences under Sections 323 (voluntarily causing hurt), 420 (cheating), 467 (forgery of valuable security), 468 (forgery for purpose of cheating), 471 (using forged document) and 120B read with 34 of the IPC, in connection with a land dispute.

The high court had dismissed the second anticipatory bail application of the accused on the ground that no new circumstances were shown.

It had relied on its earlier order rejecting his first anticipatory bail plea, in which the court directed the petitioner to surrender before the trial court and seek regular bail in terms of the decision in Satender Kumar Antil v. CBI.

The top court said such a direction was wholly without jurisdiction and said that if a court chooses to reject anticipatory bail, it may do so, but it cannot compel the accused to surrender. PTI

SC panel frames ICU norms for hospitals

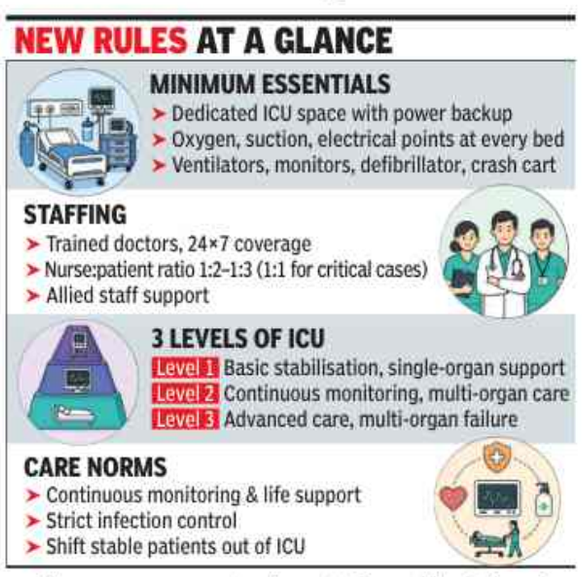
Sets Staffing, Equipment & Infra Needs

Anuja.Jaiswal@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: An expert committee formed by Supreme Court has laid down minimum standards for intensive care units (ICUs), defining what hospitals must have to qualify as possessing an ICU — covering infrastructure, equipment and staffing.

The framework mandates a dedicated ICU space with access to emergency services, operation theatres and laboratories, along with power backup, sanitation and proper layout. Bedside essentials include oxygen, suction and electrical points, along with equipment such as monitors, ventilators, defibrillators, crash carts, infusion and syringe pumps, glucometers and ECG machines.

Staffing is central to the norms. ICUs must be led by trained doctors and be manned round the clock, with higher nurse-to-patient ratios than in wards — ranging from 1:2 to 1:3 and up to 1:1 for critically ill or ventilated patients — supported by allied healthcare staff. The guidelines also emphasise continuous monitoring, life-support systems and strict infection control protocols as essential to ICU care.


NEW RULES AT A GLANCE
MINIMUM ESSENTIALS
Dedicated ICU space with power backup
Oxygen, suction, electrical points at every bed
Ventilators, monitors, defibrillator, crash cart
STAFFING
Trained doctors, 24×7 coverage
Nurse:patient ratio 1:2–1:3 (1:1 for critical cases)
Allied staff support
3 LEVELS OF ICU
Level 1 Basic stabilisation, single-organ support
Level 2 Continuous monitoring, multi-organ care
Level 3 Advanced care, multi-organ failure
CARE NORMS
Continuous monitoring & life support
Strict infection control
Shift stable patients out of ICU

The norms are part of "Guidelines for the Organisation and Delivery of Intensive Care Services", a report drafted by a three-member committee and vetted by medical experts, and endorsed by the court as "practical, implementable and necessary as a minimum standard for an ICU".

A bench of Justices Ahsanuddin Amanullah and R Mahadevan has asked states and Union territories to submit action plans identifying gaps and implementation strategies by May 18.

The Supreme Court-appointed panel — comprising AIIMS doctor Nitish Naik, additional solicitor general Aishwarya Bhati and advocate Karan Bharioke — has said clinical judgment should guide decisions on the level of care required.

Dr Harsh Mahajan, chairman of Mahajan Imaging Lab and one of the experts who vetted the guidelines, said it recognises gaps in rural and remote areas and suggests measures such as interim staffing norms and linking smaller ICUs with higher centres through e-ICU or tele-ICU support.

Dr Saumitra Rawat of Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, part of group that vetted the guidelines, said, "The new guidelines classify ICUs into levels, making it mandatory for even entry-level units to meet defined norms," he said.

Security recall coincides with AAP protests

▶ Continued from page 1

The official clarified that except for Raghav Chadha, who holds Z-category cover in Punjab and Delhi, none of the other MPs had categorised security. Chadha was designated a Z protectee by the Centre on April 15 after the state withdrew his Z-plus cover.

This shift took place following Chadha's public fallout with AAP leadership after his removal as the party's deputy leader in the Rajya Sabha.

The security withdrawal — Harbhajan Singh had the largest security detail of over a dozen personnel — coincides with AAP continuing its protests against the MPs across Ludhiana, Bathinda, Faridkot, and Chandigarh.

Kejri made last-ditch efforts to stop defections but failed

Ambika Pandit | TNN

New Delhi: Getting to know that his party MPs in Rajya Sabha could break away to join BJP only towards the end, AAP supremo **Arvind Kejriwal** made last-ditch efforts to salvage the situation by reaching out to most of them, but it proved a case of too little too late.

That Sandeep Pathak too joined the breakaway group was the biggest surprise as Kejriwal saw him as a loyalist who wouldn't switch sides, people aware of the developments said.

Meanwhile, Aam Aadmi Party MP Sanjay Singh said at a press conference on Sunday he has submitted a petition to Rajya Sabha Chairman C P Radhakrishnan seeking disqualification of the 7 AAP MPs who have merged with BJP. He said the party would also pursue legal action if needed, claiming that the move violated the anti-defection law.

Singh said that many Supreme Court judgments, including those related to Uttarakhand and Arunachal Pradesh, had clarified how such defections could lead to disqualification.

Meanwhile, the trajectory of events before the defections shows that Kejriwal started reaching out to AAP MPs from April 22, with calls being made and meetings held with at least Vikramjit Singh Sahney, Ashok Mittal and Sandeep Pathak, sources said. Harbhajan Singh was in Mumbai, but Kejriwal is learnt to have also spoken to him.

When Sahney met Kejriwal on April 22, the latter asked him if he was under any pressure and had received any calls to join BJP. It is learnt that Kejriwal also met Sandeep Pathak for one and a half hours and emerged confident from the meeting that Pathak would not cross over, the sources said.

Kejriwal spoke to Sahney again on Friday and asked the MP to meet him in the evening. However, Raghav Chadha held a press conference in the afternoon where the announcement of the MPs crossing over to BJP was made.

TDP's AP unit chief condemns protest at B'luru comedy show

▶ Continued from page 1

The group questioned Uday's remarks about a Naxal assassination attempt on Naidu in 2003 and warned him against repeating such content in his shows. They reportedly tried to compel Uday to raise slogans in support of TDP leaders, which he declined, stating that his comedy included references to multiple political parties, including the opposition. The group left before police arrived at the venue.

TDP's Andhra unit chief and MLA Palla Srinivasa Rao condemned the protest. "We will not support any protests against freedom of speech," said Palla.

He, however, cautioned stand-up comedians, artistes against making insensitive comments on sensitive issues. "They may think they can gain instant popularity by making indecent or controversial remarks about reputed personalities. They are thoroughly wrong," Rao said.

Spectrum delicencing next mth to avoid road crashes via tech

Dipak.Dash@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Aiming to prevent road crashes — caused by vehicles coming from wrong direction, at blind curves, collisions at under-construction sites or falling into pits — through technology, the telecom department will de-licence a spectrum band next month for roll out of 'Vehicle to Vehicle (V2V)' and 'Vehicle to Infra (V2I)' communication systems.

In Jan, a software engineer had died after his car fell into an unmarked, water-filled pit in Noida, as there was no barricading or visible warning, one of the several cases of vehicles crashing into with under-construction structures.

TOI has learnt that at a meeting held on April 20, the Supreme Committee on Road Safety directed the telecom department for delicencing the 5.875–5.925 GHz band. The spectrum will be open for use by all stakeholders as pre-prescribed conditions.

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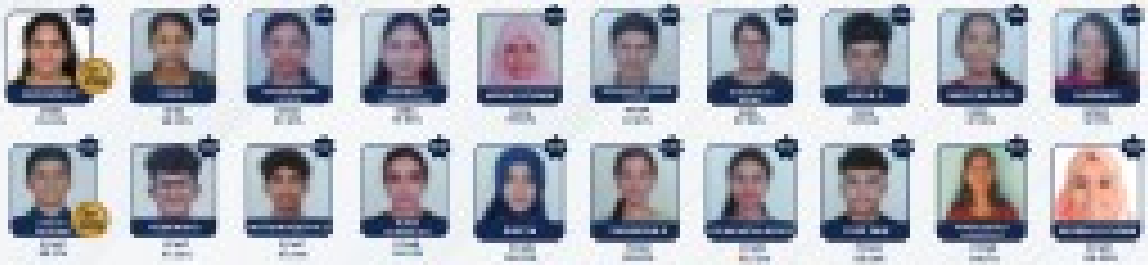

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SCAN FOR ENQUIRY

TIMES GLOBAL

THE TIMES OF INDIA, BENGALURU | MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2026

IF THE PATH BE BEAUTIFUL, LET US NOT ASK WHERE IT LEADS
— ANATOLE FRANCE

NIKKI GLASER REGRETS TELLING ABOUT LEONARDO DICAPRIO'S GIFT TO HER: 'HE'S GONNA THINK THAT I'M BRAGGING ABOUT IT'

'WICKED' ACTOR MARISSA BODE SAYS WAS 'DENIED BOARDING A FLIGHT BECAUSE I'M DISABLED': 'THIS IS BLATANT SEGREGATION'

US gunman sent anti-govt writings to family minutes before shooting

Called Self 'Friendly Federal Assassin'; Was Angry With Admin Policies

Washington: The man accused of opening fire at the White House Correspondents' Dinner sent writings to family members minutes before the shooting, referring to himself as a "Friendly Federal Assassin," railing against Trump administration policies and signalling what investigators increasingly believe was a politically driven attack, according to a law enforcement official familiar with the investigation.

The writings, sent shortly before shots were fired at the Washington Hilton, made repeated references to President Trump without naming him directly and alluded to grievances over a range of administration actions and recent events, including US strikes on drug smuggling boats in the eastern Pacific, the official said.

Investigators are treating the writings, along with a trail of social media posts and interviews with family members, as some of the clearest evidence yet of the suspect's mindset and possible motives. President Trump told Fox News that the suspect was "a sick guy" who had an anti-Christian manifesto and "a lot of hatred in his heart". Authorities also uncovered what the official described as numerous anti-Trump social media posts linked to the suspect, Cole Tomas Allen, a California man. Allen's brother contacted police in New London, Connecticut, after receiving the writings, according to the official. A police spokesperson said they contacted federal law enforcement after receiving that information.

Federal agents have also interviewed Allen's sister in Maryland, who told investigators her brother had legally purchased several weapons from a California gun store and stored them at their parents' home in Torrance without their knowledge, according to the official. She described her brother as prone to making radical statements, the official said. Allen legally bought a .38-caliber semi-automatic pistol in Oct 2023 and a 12-gauge shotgun two years later, the official and another law enforcement official told AP.

Authorities are still trying to determine how specific Allen's alleged targets were. Officials have said investigators are examining whether his grievances centred on Trump and vice president JD Vance personally or reflected a broader hostility toward the administration. The suspect was expected to face criminal charges Monday from the justice department, whose acting leader, Todd Blanche, said the suspect travelled by train from California and checked in as a guest days earlier at the hotel where the Saturday night gala dinner was held.

Social media posts that appear to match the suspect show he is a highly educated tutor and amateur video game developer. A May 2025 profile photo of Allen appears to match the appearance of the man in a photo of the alleged attacker being taken into custody that was posted Saturday by Trump. The photo, posted on LinkedIn, shows him in a cap and gown after graduating with a master's degree in computer science from California State University. Allen earned a bachelor's degree in 2017 in mechanical engineering from the California Institute of Technology. He listed his involvement there in a Christian student fellowship and a campus group that battled with Nerf guns. AP

HOW SHOOTING UNFOLDED

Photos: AP, Reuters

Amid the chaos, the president was quickly surrounded by US Secret Service personnel, their weapons drawn, and they quickly rushed Trump off the stage and through a back curtain

8.35pm ET | Guests at Washington Hilton dinner take cover when shots are heard; Secret Service agents rush towards Trump, escort him and his cabinet out of ballroom

What Happened | Sole gunman charges Secret Service checkpoint in hotel's lobby area, armed with a shotgun, a handgun and multiple knives; Secret Service members intercept him, an agent is injured

9.17pm | Trump makes first comments after shooting, recommends event continue

9.45pm | Trump leaves the hotel, arrives back at White House minutes before 10pm

10.30pm | Trump addresses media at White House, suggests suspect a lone shooter

11.13pm | Suspect charged with using a firearm, and assault on a federal officer

Cole Tomas Allen, a suspect in the shooting incident, lies on the floor after being detained by law enforcement personnel

SECURITY LAPSE AT HOTEL?

- No metal detectors at hotel's entrances, and a secure perimeter only placed closer to the ballroom deeper inside the hotel
- Security video posted by Trump shows gunman sprinting past the security checkpoint

TRUMP BATS FOR BALLROOM AT WH

Trump says incident underscores why he wants a $400 million ballroom on White House grounds equipped with latest security features. 'It's not a particularly secure building,' he says of Hilton. 'It's (ballroom) bulletproof glass. We need the ballroom'

Washington Hilton is the same hotel outside of which John Hinckley Jr. tried to assassinate President Ronald Reagan in 1981

LOUD BANGS, PANIC AND EVACUATIONS

It was meant to be a glitzy Saturday night at a Washington ballroom, but the glamour was shattered by gunshots that left guests diving to the floor and US president and his cabinet being bundled out by security personnel. The entire ballroom was ordered evacuated, and several hundred guests made their way into the Hilton lobby and out into the chilly air. Guests were seen hugging, making calls, texting friends and loved ones, and their news bureaus

From shock to 'staged': Conspiracy theories hit the ground running

Chidanand Rajghatta | TNN

Washington: Within minutes of gunfire erupting outside a Washington media dinner attended by President Trump, conspiracy theories flooded social media, reflecting the polarised environment in America in which even violent incidents are instantly refracted through partisan suspicion.

Online forums lit up with claims that the episode was "staged," – the hashtag trending on X – with users parsing video clips, eyewitness accounts, and body language to construct narratives. The swirl of speculation—unsubstantiated and often contradictory—underscored a broader erosion of trust in institutions and official accounts.

Among the earliest targets of scrutiny was First Lady Melania Trump, whose reaction in the seconds after the commotion drew intense analysis. Others zeroed in on the sequence of evacuations, noting that Vice President JD Vance appeared to have been moved to safety before the President.

Adding to the intrigue was the presence of Oz Pearlman, a well-known mentalist who was interacting with the President and First Lady moments before the disturbance. Conspiracy-minded commentators suggested, without evidence, that his proximity to the couple at a critical moment and a paper he was holding up was significant.

The speculation quickly spilled into political commentary. Mary Trump, the president's niece and a frequent critic, posted a sardonic remark on X questioning the optics of the President's reaction, alluding to past instances where Trump struck a defiant pose after surviving threats.

Reuters

Cole Tomas Allen, the suspect, is detained by law enforcement personnel in Washington DC

"So weird Donald didn't stand up, ask for his shoes, defiantly raise his fist, and say "Fight, fight, fight," she wrote snarkily on X, reflecting the growing credibility issues the President has with nearly half the country. Her comment—shared widely—captured the scepticism among critics who argue that the President's public persona invites doubt even in moments of genuine danger.

Compounding the situation was a promotional remark by White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt, who had previewed the evening by saying Trump was "ready to rumble" and that "there will be shots fired tonight in the room." Intended as rhetorical flourish about political sparring, the line was seized upon after the incident as eerie foreshadowing.

Details surrounding the alleged assailant further fed speculation. Witnesses described a chaotic scene outside the banquet hall, where security personnel subdued a man attempting to rush past a magnetometer. Questions proliferated online about how the suspect was apprehended without being shot, with some users implying—again without evidence—that the response was inconsistent with standard Secret Service procedures.

Images circulating on social media showing the individual shirtless while being restrained added another layer of conjecture, with users reading significance into what authorities suggested may simply have been the result of a struggle during apprehension. The venue—historically linked in the public imagination to the 1981 shooting of Ronald Reagan—became part of the narrative.

Beyond the immediate incident, political interpretations quickly took hold. Some critics accused the President of leveraging the episode to shift attention from foreign policy challenges, particularly tensions involving Iran, while others suggested it could bolster his longstanding push for constructing a new White House ballroom—an idea that has drawn bipartisan scepticism over cost and necessity.

Debate also raged over the background of the suspect. Competing claims circulated alleging ties to both major parties. Publicly available records reviewed by multiple outlets indicate the individual was not formally affiliated with either party, though reports that he made a small political donation to Vice President Kamala Harris's campaign added fuel to partisan arguments online.

The spread of conspiracy theories mirrors patterns seen after previous high-profile security scares. While officials continue to piece together the sequence of events, the online reaction itself has become a secondary story—one that highlights the challenges of governing and communicating in an era where scepticism is not pervasive but instantaneous.

Thuds, an eerie silence, then chaos at dinner

Washington: The first indications that something had gone wrong at the 2026 White House Correspondents' Association dinner came around 8.35pm ET on Saturday from a series of audible but mysterious thuds. Dinner chatter paused.

The silence was broken when the doors crashed open to the giant ballroom at the Washington Hilton, where some 2,600 journalists and their guests - dressed with rare pomp in tuxedos and gowns — had just sat down for the salad courses and glasses of wine. President Donald Trump was seated with first lady Melania Trump, Vice President JD Vance and other dignitaries at a long head table.

AFP

A home associated with the shooter in Torrance, California

Elegantly uniformed waiters soon charged down the middle aisle. Agents hustled Vance and several others off the stage. Plainclothes officers sprang from their seats and pushed to the ground several cabinet members, who had been seated moments earlier at tables among the journalists, then rolled the administration officials beneath tables.

Other officers drew handguns. Still others materialised seemingly from nowhere in full tactical gear, long guns trained on the astonished, alarmed attendees, most of whom were diving to the floor, crawling under tables and chairs for safety. Trump and the first lady barely moved at first as chaos erupted around them. "I thought it was a tray going down," Trump told reporters in a White House press conference hours later.

Personnel in combat dress swarmed the ballroom stage. Secretary of state Marco Rubio was quickly shuttled away. Agents shoved homeland security secretary Markwayne Mullin into a side room and led house speaker Mike Johnson away while tugging on his tuxedo jacket. Several ball attendees began chanting, "USA! USA! USA!"

Then a roomful of scribes began to work. Some 2,600 people tried to figure out what exactly had happened. Meanwhile, agents sealed the doors to the ballroom. Gentlemen undid their bow ties. Ladies slid off their high heels. REUTERS

UNDER FIRE: TRACKING THREATS TO TRUMP

March 2016
Dayton, Ohio
Man tries to break police barricade, rush to stage during a Trump rally, arrested

June 2016
Las Vegas, Nevada
Man tries to grab a cop's pistol during Trump's speech, confesses desire to murder him

Sept 2017
Mandan, North Dakota
Man steals a forklift, tries to drive it toward the presidential motorcade, arrested

Oct 2018
Envelope containing castor beans sent to Trump, navy veteran arrested

Aug 2020
Trump escorted from a press briefing after an armed suspect is shot outside White House fencing

Sept 2020
New York A Canadian writes a ricin-laced letter to Trump that he should drop out of the ongoing 2020 presidential election, arrested

July 2024
Butler, Pennsylvania
Gunman fires eight shots at Trump while speaking at a rally; one bullet grazes Trump's right ear; shooter killed

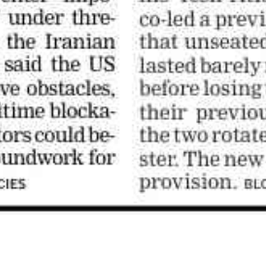
Sept 2024
Florida
Man wielding a rifle seen at Trump International Golf Club in Florida, while Trump was golfing at the club. Gunman sentenced to life in prison

July 2024
A Pakistani man with connections to Iran, Asif Merchant, is arrested in Houston and charged with recruiting people to help kill Trump, on behalf of IRGC

May 2025
An ICE officer claims of getting a handwritten letter from someone claiming to be a Mexican immigrant threatening to shoot Trump at his next rally

Aug 2025
A is held in DC and charged with making violent threats against Trump

March 2026
Mar-a-Lago
A civilian plane intercepted after it violates Mar-a-Lago no-fly zone



Feb 2026
Mar-a-Lago
Secret Service shoot and kill a man reportedly carrying a shotgun and gas canister onto grounds of Mar-a-Lago, Trump's private residence in Florida

Oct 2025
Secret service agents find an elevated hunting stand near Palm Beach airport in Florida with a direct line of sight toward area where Air Force One was parked

Iranians can call us but they must agree to no nukes, else no point in meeting: Trump

Iran Foreign Min Returns To Islamabad For Talks Before Heading To Moscow

Islamabad/Washington: President Trump said on Sunday that Iran could call if it wanted to negotiate an end to the war launched by the US and Israel, as Iran's foreign minister returned to Pakistan for talks despite the absence of US counterparts. Hopes of reviving peace efforts had earlier receded after Trump scrapped a visit to Islamabad by his envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, even as Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi continued to shuttle between mediating countries.

"If they want to talk, they can come to us, or they can call us. There is a telephone. We have nice, secure lines," Trump said in an interview on Fox News' 'The Sunday Briefing'. He added, "They know what has to be in the agreement. It's very simple: they cannot have a nuclear weapon, otherwise there's no reason to meet."

AFP

Iranian foreign minister Abbas Araghchi (R) with the Sultan of Oman, Haitham bin Tariq before their talks in Muscat on Sunday

Speaking in Florida, Trump said he cancelled his envoys' visit due to too much travel and expense for what he considered an inadequate Iranian offer. Iran "offered a lot, but not enough," Trump said. After the latest diplomatic trip was called off, two US Air Force C-17s carrying security staff, equipment and vehicles used to protect US officials flew out of Pakistan, two Pakistani govt sources said on Sunday.

After holding talks in Pakistan, Araghchi flew to Oman - another mediator in the war - where he met the country's leader, Haitham bin Tariq al-Said, on Sunday. They discussed security in the strait and Araghchi called for a regional security framework free of outside interference, according to Iran's foreign ministry.

Araghchi meets Munir

Aragchi later returned to Islamabad on Sunday and met Pakistan army chief Field Marshal Asim Munir, local media reported. After holding talks with Munir, Araghchi left for Moscow. There was no official word from Pakistan about the meeting which apparently focused on the ongoing peace efforts by Islamabad.

Iran's ISNA news agency quoted Tehran's ambassador Kazem Jalali as saying: "Foreign minister Abbas Araghchi will meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin."

Earlier on Sunday, Iran's semi-official Tasnim news agency reported that Araghchi's talks with Pakistani officials were expected to include "implementing a new legal regime over the Strait of Hormuz, receiving compensation, guaranteeing no renewed military aggression by warmongers, and lifting the naval blockade."

Iran's leadership in disarray

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian told Pakistani PM Shehbaz Sharif on phone that Tehran would not enter "imposed negotiations" under threats, according to the Iranian govt. Pezeshkian said the US should first remove obstacles, including its maritime blockade, before negotiators could begin laying the groundwork for a settlement. AGENCIES

2 former Israeli PMs unite parties to take on Bibi

Naftali Bennett and Yair Lapid, two former prime ministers of Israel, announced the merger of their political parties, creating a new entity that could outpoll that of sitting PM Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud in the upcoming election.

The party, named Together, will be led by Bennett, a hawk and one-time settler advocate who has edged closer to the centre, especially on domestic issues. Although he left politics after losing to Netanyahu in 2022, he is the strongest challenger to the prime minister, according to weekly voter surveys.

Lapid, a centrist whose base is in Tel Aviv, currently leads the opposition through his Yesh Atid party. The two co-led a previous big tent govt that unseated Netanyahu but lasted barely more than a year before losing to him in 2022. In their previous arrangement, the two rotated as prime minister. The new deal has no such provision. BLOOMBERG

Trump wanted show to go on but was vetoed by law enforcement

▶Continued from P1

Security Service agents came storming through the aisles yelling "get down, get down" while other agents swarmed around the president and his wife and rushed them out. Security detail attached to various cabinet members also shepherded them out. President Trump, while still at the hotel, said he wanted the show to go, but he would defer to the advice of law enforcement.

In fact, most of the guests stayed back amid expectations that Trump would return after WHCA president, CBS White House reporter Weijia Jiang, said the event would continue. Trump apparently wanted to return but was advised by security he should not, which he indicated in a social media post shortly thereafter. "Quite an evening in DC. Secret Service and Law Enforcement did a fantastic job. They acted quickly and bravely. The shooter has been apprehended, and I have recommended that we 'LET THE SHOW GO ON' but will entirely be guided by Law Enforcement. They will make a decision shortly. Regardless of that decision, the evening will be much different than planned, and we'll just, plain, have to do it again," he said in a post, following which the event concluded without dinner.

Reuters

IN THE LINE OF FIRE

Trump's message earned encomiums from many of his supporters, who portrayed the incident as a third assassination attempt on him and praised his courage in wanting to return to deliver his speech.

Shooting proves need for WH ballroom: Trump

Washington: President Trump on Sunday used a shooting at a gala he attended in Washington to push his plans to construct a huge ballroom next to the White House that has faced legal challenges.

"What happened last night is exactly the reason that our great Military, Secret Service, Law Enforcement and, for different reasons, every President for the last 150 years, have been DEMANDING that a large, safe, and secure Ballroom be built ON THE GROUNDS OF WHITE HOUSE," Trump wrote on Truth Social platform.

The $400-million ballroom has become a passion project for Trump. In his Sunday post, Trump lauded the security features of the proposed ballroom. "This event would never have happened with the Militarily Top Secret Ballroom currently under construction at the White House," Trump wrote.

"It cannot be built fast enough! While beautiful, it has every highest level security feature there is." AFP

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—Ishan Kishan | SRH 'keeper-batter

'POWER' FAILURE HITS CSK

Rabada, Siraj, Sudharsan And Gill Help Titans Win Both Powerplays And Notch Up Easy Eight-Wicket Victory

Neha.Surana@timesofindia.com

Chennai: The stark contrast in Powerplay efficiency proved decisive as Gujarat Titans dismantled Chennai Super Kings by eight wickets at the MA Chidambaram Stadium on Sunday.

The stars of the show were South African paceman Kagiso Rabada (3-25), who broke the back of the CSK top-order, and in-form 'home boy' B Sai Sudharsan (87,46 balls; 4x4, 7x6), whose orthodox strokeplay propelled GT to fifth on the table with eight points. CSK now have six from eight and their hopes of a last-four berth are fast diminishing.

The tone was set early when the Titans' pace duo of Rabada and Mohammed Siraj ripped through the hosts with a ferocious opening spell on a rare lively Chepauk surface, restricting them to a paltry 28-3 in the Powerplay. On the other hand, GT's openers mastered the two-paced conditions, during their chase of a tricky 159. Captain Shubman Gill (33) and Sudharsan helped the Titans race to 55-0 in the first six overs, effectively seizing control despite a disciplined opening from Anshul Kamboj, who conceded just 3 runs in his first two overs.

Sudharsan continued his stellar run this season and remained unfazed even after losing Gill in the seventh over. His innings, marked by control and clean striking, was studded with seven sixes and four fours. The youngster and the No. 3 batter Jos Buttler, hardly put a foot wrong and went on to stitch a 97-run partnership for the second wicket. With CSK's attack offering little resistance, the duo turned the chase into a formality, finishing it off with 20 balls to spare.

However, Rababa and Siraj set up the win under the sweltering sun. They bent their backs, got bounce off the Chepauk surface, occasionally pitching one up, making it difficult for the CSK openers Sanju Samson and Ruturaj Gaikwad.

Rabada's clinical double-strike, pounding in at 148–149 kph, removed the man in form Samson and Urvil Patel, playing his first game of this IPL. Siraj followed up with a cross-seamer to send back the 'Impact Player' Sarfaraz Khan for a golden duck, and suddenly skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad (74*, 60b; 4x6, 6x4) was watching his side crumble before the Powerplay had even run its course.

The nightmare only deepened as the bowlers forced a suffocating dry spell. There were no boundaries for five overs, and the pressure mounted when left-arm spinner Manav Suthar dismissed Dewald Brevis just as he looked to break the shackles. By the time CSK crawled to 50 in 12 overs, they had recorded their second-slowest team fifty in IPL history and the slowest by any side this season. With the innings stalling at a precarious 43-3 at the halfway stage, Gaikwad finally took charge and played a gritty knock. He began shifting gears slowly and stitched together a recovery with useful cameos from Shivam Dube, Kartik Sharma, and Jamie Overton. En route, he brought up a much-needed half-century – his first in 11 IPL innings and his first this season – on a surface that remained far from easy for batters. In a frantic penultimate over burst, Overton hammered four consecutive boundaries off Arshad Khan to inject momentum as the hosts collected 107 runs in the final eight overs. However, the early damage proved too great to overcome, as the recovery ultimately fell short against GT's well-settled top order.

B A Raju

ACE OF PACE: Gujarat Titans' pacer Kagiso Rabada dismissed Sanju Samson and Urvil Patel cheaply and set the tone for a dominant win against Chennai Super Kings at Chepauk on Sunday

SCOREBOARD

CSK: Sanju Samson c Buttler b Rabada 11, Ruturaj Gaikwad not out 74, Urvil Patel c Holder b Rabada 4, Sarfaraz Khan c Buttler b Mohammed Siraj 0, Dewald Brevis c Shubman Gill b Suthar 2, Shivam Dube b Arshad Khan 22, Kartik Sharma c Holder b Rabada 15, Jamie Overton c Shahrukh Khan b Arshad Khan 18, Akeal Hosein not out 0. **Extras:** (LB-2 W-10) 12

Total: (For 7 wickets in 20 overs) 158
Fall of wickets: 1-21, 2-25, 3-26, 4-37, 5-96, 6-122, 7-143.
Bowling: Mohammed Siraj 4-0-23-1, Kagiso Rabada 4-0-25-3, Manav Suthar 3-0-22-1, Jason Holder 4-0-22-0, Arshad Khan 4-0-43-2, Rashid Khan 1-0-21-0.
GT: Sai Sudharsan c Brevis b Hosein 87, Shubman Gill st Samson b Noor Ahmad 33, Jos Buttler not out 39, Washington Sundar not out 1. **Extras** (w 2) 2. **Total** (For 2 wickets in 16.4 overs) 162.
Fall of wickets: 1-58, 2-155.
Bowling: Akeal Hosein 3.4-0-46-1, Anshul Kamboj 3-0-16-0, Jamie Overton 2-0-28-0, Gurjapneet Singh 3-0-36-0, Noor Ahmad 4-0-29-1, Shivam Dube 1-0-7-0.
Result: GT won by eight wickets.
Player-of-the-Match: Kagiso Rabada

MSD INJURES CALF AGAIN

CSK head coach Stephen Fleming on Sunday said MS Dhoni's return to the IPL will be further delayed as he suffered a fresh calf injury during a warm-up game. "Yeah, he's pretty keen. The calf is a tough one though. If he takes off and rips the it again, he will be gone," said Fleming. PTI

SAI SUDHARSAN

HOW THEY STAND

TEAM	M	W	L	NR	NRR	P
PBKS	7	6	0	1	1.333	13
RCB	7	5	2	0	1.101	10
SRH	8	5	3	0	0.815	10
RR	8	5	3	0	0.602	10
GT	8	4	4	0	-0.475	8
CSK	8	3	5	0	-0.121	6
DC	7	3	4	0	-0.184	6
KKR	8	2	5	1	-0.751	5
MI	7	2	5	0	-0.736	4
LSG	8	2	6	1	-1.106	4

3/25 Kagiso Rabada's bowling figures on Sunday are his best for Gujarat Titans (GT) in 12 matches. The pacer's figures are also his best vs Chennai Super Kings (CSK), bettering the 3-26 at Dubai (DICS) on Sept 25, 2020.

12 Overs taken by CSK to reach 50 — the second most overs taken by them to reach the 50-run mark behind the 12.1 overs taken by them vs RCB at Bengaluru on May 22, 2011. It's also the most overs a team has faced to get to 50 this year.

—Stats: Rajesh Kumar

KKR down LSG in Super Over as Rinku's 83* trumps Mohsin's 5/23

Fazal Khan | TNN

Lucknow: Sunil Narine has fought and won countless battles for Kolkata Knight Riders over the years. On Sunday night at the Ekana Stadium, the veteran once again stood at the centre of chaos, entrusted with bowling the first Super Over of this IPL in a finish that swung violently till the final delivery.

Lucknow Super Giants, who had clawed their way back to force the tie, erred immediately by sending an out-of-form Nicholas Pooran to open the Super Over alongside Aiden Markram. Narine flighted the first ball, bowled it slower through the air, and rattled Pooran's stumps to decisively tilt the contest.

Markram followed three balls later, dismissed on the boundary as Rovman Powell and Rinku Singh combined to complete a superb catch under pressure. With just two runs to defend, Rinku needed only one ball, calmly striking it away to seal KKR's second win of the season.

Earlier, chasing 156, LSG endured a roller-coaster pursuit. Brief contributions from Rishabh Pant and Ayush Badoni offered hope, but wickets continued to stall momentum. With 17 required in the final over, Kartik Tyagi bowled two costly waist-high no-balls and conceded sixes, yet still had seven to defend off the final ball. Mohammed Shami, however, held his nerve, dispatching a length delivery into the stands to force the Super Over.

The defeat will sting LSG fast bowler Mohsin Khan the most. The left-armer delivered a sensational spell of 5/23, nearly dragging his side home by restricting KKR to 155/7 despite a defiant 83 from Rinku Singh (51 balls).

Mohsin ripped through the top order early, dismissing Tim Seifert for a duck and removing captain Ajinkya Rahane for 10 in successive maiden overs. The innings took an extraordinary turn when Angkrish Raghuvanshi became only the fourth batter in IPL history to be given out obstructing the field, reacting angrily as he walked off.

With KKR struggling at 31/4, Cameron Green and Rinku steadied things before Mohsin struck again. Rinku then launched a late counter-attack, adding 62 off 29 balls with Narine, including four consecutive sixes in the final over, to give KKR a fighting total, one that ultimately proved just enough in a night where Narine's calm proved decisive once more.

Brief Scores: Kolkata Knight Riders 155/7 (Rinku Singh 83 not out, Cameron Green 34; Mohsin Khan 5/23) tied with **LSG 155/8** (A Markram 31, R Pant 42, A Badoni 24; V Arora 2/24, V Chakravarthy 2/33). **Super Over LSG 1/2 in 0.3 overs** lost to **KKR 2/0 in 0.1 over.**

Sunil Kumar

83* Rinku Singh has got his career-best score in T20, beating the 79 for UP vs Punjab in the SMAT at Jaipur on Oct 22, 2022.

MIRACLE MAN: KKR vice-captain Rinku Singh slammed an unbeaten 83 and pouched five catches vs LSG in Lucknow

Chahal urges bowlers to adapt as scores mount

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New Delhi: Yuzvendra Chahal brimmed with confidence after Punjab Kings scripted T20 history at the Arun Jaitley Stadium, pulling off the highest successful chase in men's T20 cricket by hunting down a daunting 265 against Delhi Capitals. "It will be hard for any team to face our batting line-up," the veteran leg-spinner said.

Chahal stressed that belief coursed through the camp even before a ball was bowled. "We felt positive before the innings started becausewe know the quality we possess with the bat. It was a batting-friendly wicket, and we needed an excellent start. We got that."

Openers Prabhsimran Singh and Priyansh Arya provided the perfect launchpad, smashing 116 runs in the Powerplay alone. "Prabhsimran and Priyansh gave us the momentum we needed in the first six overs. That helped our batters through the middle overs and put the bowlers under pressure," Chahal said.

Chahal though acknowledged the mounting challenge bowlers face in high-scoring encounters, especially with the Impact Sub rule. "I can understand why dealing with Impact Sub rule can be challenging, but you have to adapt. This is the direction the format is heading in, and we have to find solutions," he said.

Evolution with impact, the Kohli way

Star Batter Not Only Has Kept Up With Times But Quietly Impacted Strokeplay In Modern Times

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Tarun Rawat

RCB captain Rajat Patidar trains at the Arun Jaitley stadium on Sunday, the eve of their IPL clash against Delhi Capitals

New Delhi: There are only a handful of games that Virat Kohli will play on his home turf in Delhi. That explains the deafening clamour for passes for Royal Challengers Bengaluru's (RCB) weekday match against Delhi Capitals in the corridors of the Delhi and District Cricket Association (DDCA).

From brash non-conformist youngster to a spiritually driven statesman, the legend of Kohli is a story of constant evolution. It's a process that doesn't cease, one that inspires awe in people who witness it firsthand. It has allowed him to go shoulder-to-shoulder with a younger generation that is rewriting the grammar of T20 batting, a process that helps him retain the superstardom even when an anti-superstar culture has been initiated in Indian cricket circles.

IPL has transcended to a level where it is close to being dubbed as a different sport to what is being played around the world. On Sunday, a staggering 986 runs were scored in 77.2 overs in two matches. The use of unabated power, force and physicality behind those runs could match the violence of any action movie.

At the other end of the spectrum is Kohli who uses his bat as a fine piece of equipment that shreds the morale of the bowling attacks bit by bit, over by over. Match by match.

Even as the world was recovering from Sunday's gory run fest — that saw 265 and 229 being comfortably chased down — one must recall that it was Kohli who played the lead role in a comfortable 200-plus chase a night against Gujarat Titans an evening before. Gold standard in batting in Indian cricket for the last 15 years, his legacy has quietly influenced the renaissance of India's contemporary T20 batting.

RCB captain Rajat Patidar and Devdutt Padikkal spent the entire match-eve evening here at the Kotla, hitting big shots down the ground. RCB's engine room in the middle overs, the duo has redefined themselves as T20 batters this year banking on conventional shot-making. That Kohli is still challenging the next-gen of India's T20 batting stars for the Orange Cap (highest run-scorer) is a testimony to his insatiable hunger for excellence.

Ironically, this is the format that he first quit in international cricket two years ago when questions were raised on his ability to keep up with the times.

And now when the cricket world has embraced scores of 225 and beyond as IPL's new normal, Kohli has stayed relevant and a perfect example for his peers around him.

RCB mentor Dinesh Karthik puts it down to the man's stubbornness to trust his methods. "He goes back every year and assesses what he has done. He comes back with a very stubborn plan and he gets it done not on match days alone but the way he practices as well," Karthik said. "The youngsters in the team are constantly asking me what Virat bhaiya is doing differently," Karthik mentioned, "Credit to him. He constantly rediscovers himself every passing year," Karthik added.

WEATHER

36°C

NUMBERS GAME

11 Runs needed by Virat Kohli (8989 at 39.95 in 266 innings) to become the first batter to complete 9000 IPL runs.

Stats: Rajesh Kumar

It's carnage over KLass for Rahul

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New Delhi: For the longest time, **KL Rahul's** T20 career has resembled a man dragging a heavy suitcase. Stuffed inside were the perennial anxieties of strike-rates, the exhausting demands of batting deep, and the archaic, heavy tag of being the "anchor". On Saturday, at the Arun Jaitley Stadium, Rahul seemed free from all baggage.

What followed was a masterclass in calculated authority. Opening the innings for Delhi Capitals against Punjab Kings, Rahul batted through all 20 overs, remaining unbeaten on a staggering 152 off 67 balls. It was Rahul completely unburdened, accessing all parts of the ground not with reckless abandon but with aggressive clarity.

Crucially, the 34-year-old Rahul didn't abandon his "aesthetic" vibe. He didn't resort to ugly hoicks to bump up his strike-rate.

"I stuck to being true to my game, which is to play cricketing shots but also find a way to be aggressive and play proper shots," he said.

This wasn't an overnight metamorphosis; it was a conscious, arduous shedding of old habits. "I was very pleased at the end of the first 20 overs," Rahul said. "It's something that I've been working on for a very long time behind the scenes."

It shows in his numbers. His career IPL strike-rate is 138.42, but this year in the seven matches that the right-hander has played, he is scoring at a rate of 187.89. The transformation required rewiring his muscle memory and his mind. ""In T20 cricket, the mindset that I am in right now is that there is no time to say later. I had to work really hard on my six-hitting," he said.

THANK YOU FOR THE MESSAGES, NGIDI TO FANS

Delhi Capitals pacer Lungi Ngidi has issued a reassuring update after suffering a head injury during DC's IPL clash against Punjab Kings at the Arun Jaitley Stadium on Saturday.

The South African fast bowler took to Instagram on Sunday to thank fans for their concern, writing: "Thank you for the messages, all good," easing fears over his condition.

Ngidi was hospitalised after landing heavily on the back of his head and neck while attempting a catch off Priyansh Arya in the third over of PBKS' record chase. DC director of cricket Venugopal Rao said the injury was "not serious". AGENCIES

All-round Deepti stars for India

Johannesburg: Seasoned Deepti Sharma produced a stirring all-round effort, including her maiden fifer in the shortest format, to inspire India's 14-run win over South Africa in the fourth women's T20I here on Saturday.

South Africa had already taken an unassailable 3-0 lead coming into this match, and they appeared all set to extend the run after restricting India to 185/5. But Deepti (5/19), who played a big role in taking India past the 180-run mark with an unbeaten 36, grabbed key wickets to impede SA's run, and limit them to 171/9.

South Africa raised the challenge through Sune Luus (40) and Tazmine Brits (30), who added 54 runs for the second wicket. But once Deepti castled Luus, India were all over the home side like a bad rash. **Brief scores: India: 185/5 in 20 overs** (Jemimah Rodrigues 43, Deepti Sharma 36 n.o, Richa Ghosh 34 n.o; Eliz-Mari Marx 2-28, Kayla Reyneke 2-10) **bt South Africa: 171/9 in 20 overs** (Sune Luus 40, Tazmin Brits 30; Deepti Sharma 5-19). PTI

SAI Alappuzha again: Rowing official suspended amid harassment allegations

Accused Shunted To Imphal Pending Probe After Rowing Coach Files Complaint

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Kochi: The Sports Authority of India (SAI) has suspended PT Paulose, an Asian Games bronze medallist and India's first Olympic rower, who served as the High Performance Director at the National Centre of Excellence in Alappuzha, and transferred him to its Imphal centre following allegations of sexual harassment made by a female assistant rowing coach.

SPORTING SHAME

"Paulose, 49, has been suspended after a female assistant rowing coach filed a complaint in Jan this year," a SAI source told TOI.

"On receiving the complaint, SAI initiated a departmental inquiry against Paulose, which is currently under process," the source added.

"He was transferred to SAI's Imphal centre earlier this month to ensure he cannot intimidate the victim or influence the probe in any manner," the source said, adding, "Due action will be taken based on the findings of the inquiry."

The details of the allegations have not been disclosed. TOI tried to contact Paulose, but he was unavailable for comment.

Even as concerns grow over athlete welfare across SAI centres, this episode has brought back memories of a 2015 incident at SAI's Alappuzha centre, where four female rowers attempted suicide by consuming a toxic fruit called Othalanga (cerbera odollam) following alleged physical and mental harassment by senior athletes.

In that case, a 15-year-old died, while the others survived. These athletes were reportedly being forced to perform chores for their seniors, with harassment increasing every time they resisted.

In a separate incident in Jan, two female students, aged 18 and 15, were found dead by hanging inside a SAI hostel in Kollam. Police said preliminary findings point to suspected suicide. Notes seeking forgiveness from their parents were recovered, though further details have not been made public. Based on information presented in Parliament, 33 sexual harassment complaints in SAI were reported in the last 10 years, of which 25 were lodged against coaches and 8 against administrative staff.

KERALA CASES

Kerala has witnessed cases that have reignited serious concerns about athlete safety and mental well-being in SAI centres...

2015 (Alappuzha): Four female rowers consumed toxic fruit after alleged abuse by seniors; a 15-year-old died, others survived amid reports of forced chores and harassment.
2 Jan 2026 (Kollam): Two hostel students, aged 18 and 15, found dead in suspected suicide; notes to parents recovered, investigation ongoing.

Chelsea set up City final date

London: Crisis-hit Chelsea beat Leeds United 1-0 at Wembley on Sunday to reach the FA Cup final, a first-half goal from controversial Argentine midfielder Enzo Fernandez earning them a clash with Manchester City in the showpiece match next month.

Fernandez slipped between defenders to nod home a cross from Portugal winger Pedro Neto in the 23rd minute of the semifinal. Fernandez was suspended earlier this month by former coach Liam Rosenior and the club hierarchy for a press interview in which he implied he was unhappy at Chelsea and was looking to move to Spain.

FOOTBALL

The suspension came in the middle of a woeful run of five Premier League defeats for the London side amid reports of discontent among players with the inexperienced coach who had been in charge only since January. Chelsea's American owners BlueCo sacked Rosenior last Wednesday after a woeful 3-0 defeat by Brighton & Hove Albion and his assistant Calum McFarlane was put in charge until the end of the season.

On Sunday Chelsea, who have won the Cup eight times, came out with intent. They dominated the first half and held firm in the second. Manchester City beat Southampton 2-1 on Saturday to reach the Cup final which will be held on May 16.

Getty Images

DECISIVE: Enzo Fernandez (R) scored the lone goal on Sunday

ARSENAL BACK TO TOP

Arsenal arrested their slump in form with Eberechi Eze's superb early goal securing an ugly 1-0 home win against Newcastle United to reclaim top spot in the Premier League on Saturday.

Select results: English FA Cup (semis): Chelsea 1 (Fernandez 23) bt Leeds 0; **On Saturday:** Manchester City 2 (Doku 82, Gonzalez 87) bt Southampton 1 (Azaz 79).
EPL: Saturday: Arsenal 1 (Eze 9) bt Newcastle 0.
German league: Borussia Dortmund 4 (Beier 8, Guirassy 14, Bensebaini 32, Silva 87) bt Freiburg 0; Stuttgart 1 (Demirovic 61) drew with Werder Bremen 1 (Stage 18).
Spanish league: Rayo Vallecano 3 (Camello 30, Lejeune 84, Alemao 90+9) drew with Real Sociedad 3 (Oyarzabal 22, 76-pen, Oskarsson 63). AGENCIES

SNAP SHOTS

India finish on top

Hemant Burman won silver in the men's 50m rifle 3 positions and the pair of Zuhair Khan and Addya Katyal won bronze in the trap mixed team event as India completed the ISSF Junior Shooting World Cup on top of the table with a total of 16 medals, including five gold, six silver, and five bronze. Burman won silver after shooting 351.7 across the three positions in the 50m 3Positions event. The pair of Zuhair and Addya secured the bronze medal with a final score of 19.

Diksha drops to T-26: Indian golfer Diksha Dagar managed just one birdie against four bogeys on a rough and windy day at the Investec SA Women's Open in Cape Town. Diksha slipped down to T-24. Pranavi Urs (74) and Avani Prashanth (75) moved up slightly on the leaderboard. Pranavi, who was T-43, is now T-35 and Avani moved up to T-47 from T-53. The other three Indians in the field, Tvesa Malik, Vani Kapoor and Hitaashee Bakshi missed the cut.

FIFA to increase WC prize money: FIFA is in discussions with national associations to increase prize money for all 48 teams participating in the 2026 World Cup, football's global governing body said on Sunday. The proposal must be approved at Tuesday's FIFA Council meeting. In Dec, FIFA said prize money would be 50% higher than for the previous edition at $655 million after agreeing a record $727 million financial contribution to the tournament. However, FIFA has said that the prize money on offer is set to increase as they are projected to surpass $11 billion in revenue in the current four-year cycle from 2023 to 2026.

T-wolves beat Nuggets: Ayo Dosunmu came off the bench to score a career-high 43 points on 13-for-17 shooting, and the short-handed Minnesota Timberwolves pulled away for a 112-96 win over the Denver Nuggets in Game 4 of their Western Conference quarter-finals series on Saturday in Minneapolis. **Results:** Orlando 113 bt Detroit 105; Oklahoma City 121 bt Phoenix 109

Atletico's Barrios to miss Arsenal tie: Atletico Madrid midfielder Pablo Barrios is set to miss the Champions League semifinal tie against Arsenal after his club said on Sunday he sustained a thigh injury. "Barrios has suffered a muscular injury in his left thigh, which occurred during the match against Athletic Bilbao this Saturday," said Atletico in a statement.

Pics: Chethan Shivakumar

Florence blooms
Kwizera breaks record

"I missed the event record. Maybe next year I can come back for it. After the half-marathon in Berlin, I became more confident about the 10K. That race was a big confidence booster for me and really helped me."
—Florence Niyonkuru

Rodrigue Kwizera

Rwanda's Rising Star Wins On Debut; Favourite From Burundi Dominates Men's Field

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Bengaluru: The early start to the elite women's race — half an hour before sunrise to beat the summer heat — may have offered the world's leading runners some relief on Sunday. But by the time Rwanda's rising star Florence Niyonkuru surged to victory in the TCS World 10K Bengaluru, the effort had clearly taken its toll. After clocking 30:45 to win on her 10K debut, the 25-year-old collapsed onto the carpeted road at the finish line, exhausted but triumphant.

Florence held off a strong challenge from Kenya's World No. 5 Brenda Jepchirchir, who finished second in 30:59, while Ethiopia's Chaltu Dida claimed third in 31:03. Her winning time was 10 seconds slower than the meet record, but the quality of the race remained high, with the top eight runners finishing under the 32-minute mark. Defending champion Sarah Chelangat never found her rhythm and ended 15th in 32:35.

The opening five kilometres proved decisive, with the uphill stretch towards the 5K mark testing the field before the course flattened in the second half. The top eight runners crossed halfway together in 15:19 and then Florence completed the second half in 15:26. By the 7-km mark, the lead pack had shrunk to four after the U-turn on Ambedkar Road. The podium positions were

WORLD 10K

nearly settled by the 8km point on Queen's Road before Florence produced a final burst to win with a commanding 14-second lead.

"The conditions were quite hot. But I was focused on winning," Florence said later. Brenda, who won this year's Valencia 10K in 29:25, admitted the heat made the challenge tougher.

"The place where I train in Nakuru, Kenya, is much cooler, around 8 to 10 degrees, in the morning. So for me, it was a good second place, though I was expected to win," she said.

MASTERCLASS IN MEN'S RACE

The men's race followed a more predictable script as Burundi's Rodrigue Kwizera upgraded his 2023 silver (second to Sabastian Sawe, who on Sunday made history becoming the first to dip under the two-hour mark in marathon) medal to gold, setting a new event record of 27:31. With temperatures rising to 24 degrees Celsius by then, Kwizera produced a dominant finish, changing gears in the final two kilometres to win by eight seconds.

It was a masterclass to the rest of the field, including 20-year-old Ugandan Harbert Kibet, who finished second in 27:39.

The leading group of 10 athletes covered the first five kilometres in 14:01s following the pacemaker. Kwizera then took the lead by the 7.5-km mark, clocking 21:03 before speeding home. Such was his pace on the flatter part of the course that he covered the last five kilometres in only 13:3s. Kenya's Gilbert Kiprotich took third place in 27:43s. The top eight finishers went below the 28-minute mark.

"I'm very happy that I won the race. It's a very good course except for the heat," said Kwizera, who trains in Spain.

"The field was strong and Kibet had a strong race (26:39) in Castellon in Feb, so it was a good win for me," the winner, who took home $ 34,000 (26K + 8K) for winning in record time, said. "I planned to cover the first five and then push for the next two kilometres and push further in the last one km. And yes, I had the course record in my mind."

DOG'S DAY OUT: Sarah Chelangat had canine company

RESULTS: Elite Women: 1. Florence Niyonkuru (Rwa, 30:45s); 2. Brenda Jepchirchir (Ken, 30:59); 3. Chaltu Dida (Eth, 31:03); 4. Melat Biratu (Eth, 31:08); 5. Judy Chepaskwony (Ken, 31:14); 6. Janeth Chepngetich (Ken, 31:15); 7. Asefu Kiros (Eth, 31:32); 8. Wede Belew (Eth, 31:43); 9. Veronica Loleo (Ken, 32:04); 10. Esther Chebet (Uga, 32:08).
Elite Men: 1. Rodrigue Kwizera (Bdi, 27:31s NER); 2. Harbert Kibet (Uga, 27:39); 3. Gilbert Kiprotich (Ken, 27:43); 4. Saymon Amanuel (Eri, 27:44); 5. Benjamin Ratsim (Tan, 27:47); 6. Victor Kiprono (Ken, 27:52); 7. Vincent Ngetich (Ken, 27:53); 8. Dan Kibet (Uga, 27:56); 9. Eyob Melouanint (Eth, 28:01); 10. Gabriel Geay (Tan, 28:14).

SANJIVANI completes hat-trick

Harmanjot Stuns Defending Champ Abhishek Pal For Men's Crown

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Bengaluru: Sanjivani Jadhav completed a personal hat-trick in style as she muscled her way to the top spot among Indian women at the TCS World 10K here on Sunday. The Indian men's title went to Harmanjot Singh, who shocked the likes of defending champion Abhishek Pal.

Sanjivani, who won her first title with a meet record of 33:38 in 2018, clocked 35:01 to bag her fourth title on the Bengaluru roads. Soniya came second in 35:31, followed by Bhagirathi in 35:32.

The 29-year-old winner was on her own for most of the race and faced little challenge in the absence of Ankita and Seema, who both are training in the US. "I love to race in Bengaluru as not only is it one of the top races in the country, but it also gives you a bigger cash prize," Sanjivani said after picking up the winner's cheque of Rs 2.75 lakh.

INDIAN ANGLE

"I was gunning for the record, but it didn't happen, but I'm glad to do the hat trick," added the Nashik athlete, who will now shift her focus from the road to the track in preparation for the Asian Games.

PODIUM STARS: Harmanjot Singh (middle) is flanked by Shailesh Kushwaha (left) and Deepak Bhatt

ALL SMILES: Sanjivani Jadhav celebrates her win on Sunday

"The first five kms was a bit of an uphill climb and I struggled a bit in that part with the high humidity," said Sanjivani, who has been training with coach Vijendra Singh for the last 15 years.

Second-placed Soniya, who had finished seventh last year, was surprised with her second-place finish. "I had booked my return ticket and now that I won the second place, I'll have to cancel that," said Soniya.

HARMANJOT PIPS SHAILESH

The men's race saw Harmanjot face a strong challenge from Bengaluru-based Shailesh Kushwaha, but in the end, the Army man took the top spot in 29:13.

Kushwaha, who trains at the local Sree Kanteerava Stadium, surprised the experts as he pushed Harmanjot all the way before settling for second place in 29:21. Deepak Bhatt was third, clocking 29:52.

"My strategy was to go strong and if the body responds, then to go for the record. I just missed the record (by one second), but that's OK," Harmanjot said, "I tried to stay with the foreign athletes and it helped."

INDIAN TOPPERS: Women: 1. Sanjivani Jadhav (35:01s); 2. Soniya (35:31); 3. Bhagirathi (35:32); 4. Ravina Gayakwad (36:05); 5. Jyoti (36:16); 6. Sonam (36:17); 7. Nirmaben Thakor (36:34); 8. Ujala (36:54); 9. Reenu (37:00); 10. Aradhana Kumari (37:42).
Men: Harmanjot Singh (29:13s); 2. Shailesh Kushwaha (29:21); 3. Deepak Bhatt (29:52); 4. Mrunal Sarode (30:30); 5. Sunil Joliya (30:30); 6. Abhishek Pal (30:31); 7. Sunil Kumar (30:38); 8. Lovepreet Singh (30:39); 9. Gaurav Mathur (30:40); 10. Sandeep Chaudhary (30:41).

Indian women stay alive

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After suffering a narrow 2-3 defeat against Denmark in their first Group A tie, Indian women stayed alive in the Uber Cup with a commanding 4-1 victory against Ukraine in Horsens, Denmark, on Saturday.

The two-time bronze medallists had only lost the first doubles when Kavipriya Selvam and Simran Singhi went down to Polina Buhrova and Yevheniia Kantemyr 12-21, 21-17, 10-21.

UBER CUP

With India fielding PV Sindhu only in doubles, Unnati Hooda kicked off Indian campaign with a 21-19, 22-20 victory against Polina Buhrova. Tanvi Sharma rallied after losing the second game to beat Yevheniia Kantemyr 21-12, 17-21, 21-10.

TAKE THAT: Tanvi Sharma

Thailand Masters champion Devika Sihag sealed the issue for India, winning the third singles against Mariia Stoliarenko 23-21, 21-13. In the last match of the rubber, Sindhu and Tanisha Crasto downed Stoliarenko and Sofiia Lavrova 21-18, 21-15. Despite this big win, India's chances of reaching the quaterfinals are bleak. India should beat China on Monday and expect Denmark to lose against a lower-ranked Ukraine. In the other Group A tie on Saturday, China blanked Denmark 5-0.

While the women are unlikely to reach the next stage, Indian men, who play Australia on Monday, are favourites to reach the knockout stage from Group A along with China.

Result (Uber Cup): India bt Ukraine 4-1 (Unnati Hooda bt Polina Buhrova 21-19, 22-20; Tanvi Sharma bt Yevheniia Kantemyr 21-12, 17-21, 21-10; Devika Sihag bt Mariia Stoliarenko 23-21, 21-13; Kavipriya Selvam/Simran Singhi lost to Buhrova/Kantemyr 11-21, 17-21; Tanisha Crasto/Sindhu bt Sofiia Lavrova/Stoliarenko 21-18, 21-15).

'Faster, but game robbed of charm'

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Hyderabad: Slamming the Badminton World Federation's (BWF) decision to change the scoring system as "short-sighted," renowned Indian coach **U Vimal Kumar** called it a dilution of the sport without addressing the real challenges the game is facing.

NEW RULES

The AGM of the BWF approved the adoption of the 3x15 point system with over two-thirds majority on Saturday. The new format will take effect on January 4, 2027.

"It seems the Badminton World Federation is trying to make badminton easy as pickleball and padel. An interesting approach to promoting a sport has always stood for endurance, skill and mental toughness. Not sure if this is evolution...or dilution," Vimal said on Sunday. However, chief coach Pullela Gopichand had earlier pointed out that the 15-point format is easier for players with injuries. He considers the move necessary as the sport has become too physical under the 3x21 format.

While the present generation of shuttlers across the world expressed mixed views on the change, most Indians said they like the 21x3, even though 15x3 suits their play.

Olympian Aparna Popat siad, "You need to begin well in the new format. Comebacks will be difficult and the format will affect the risk-taking ability."

She added that soon everyone will adapt to the new system. "There will be resistance for any change. They have also attempted to change last year. Now that it is done, we have no option but to adapt to the new system. Initially, 15x3 may help attacking players. Pretty soon, everyone will adapt to it," said Aparna.

Two-time Asian Games bronze medallist and the mentor of Chirag Shetty, Uday Pawar is worried that the game may lose some of its charm. "By reducing it to 15x3, the endurance part has been removed. The game will become faster, but it may lose some of it's charm and grace," Pawar said.

Sawe scripts history

Sabastian Sawe made history on Sunday by becoming the first athlete to run a sub-two-hour marathon as Tigst Assefa smashed her own women's-only world record on the streets of London.

Kenya's Sawe came into the race predicting fireworks and delivered in spectacular style, crossing the line in 1hr 59min 30sec in a race for the ages. Astonishingly, the top three men all finished inside the previous men's world record of 2:00:35 set in Chicago in 2023 by the late Kelvin Kiptum.

ATHLETICS

Sawe was locked in a tight battle with Ethiopia's Yomif Kejelcha in the closing stages but surged clear. Kejelcha, running his first-ever marathon, notched a time of 1:59:41 – the fastest debut ever – with Uganda's Jacob Kiplimo third (2:00:28). "It is a day to remember for me," said the 31-year-old, whose winning time was scribbled on his shoe.

TRENDSETTER: Sabastian Sawe

In the women's race, Assefa was locked in a three-way tussle with Kenyan pair Hellen Obiri and Joyciline Jepkosgei, but surged away in the closing stages to cross the line in a time of 2:15:41. AFP

Ham triumphs in the Singapore heat

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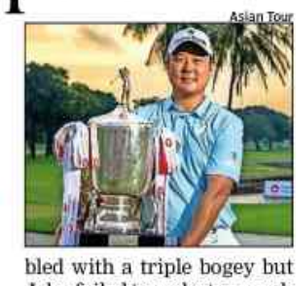
Asian Tour

Singapore: "I can't stand the heat." This is a statement from the wire-to-wire winner of the $2m Singapore Open, Korean **Jeongwoo Ham**, who turned his weakness into success in sauna-like conditions at the Sentosa Golf Club. His secret: "I just kept thinking: play quickly, get through it, and get back to the hotel, shower, and lie down under the air-conditioning. I wasn't overthinking the golf."

It must have been more than that. He had four underpar rounds in the International Series event — matched only by second-placed Cameron John — finishing off with three-under 68 under pressure, unaffected by lightning delay of three-and-a-half hours. The Australian, who started four strokes behind the leader, challenged with a five-under that included a run of five birdies in eight holes either side of the break.

SINGAPORE OPEN

Both had a bad start. On the par-four third, Ham stumbled with a triple bogey but John failed to make too much ground with a double. The lead was cut to one shot on the 12th, but Ham, whose textbook golf swing has been the talk of the town, held on for a two-stroke win on this long-hitters' paradise by the sea.

Tied-fifth overnight, Gaganjeet Bhullar never got going on the final day. While Bhullar was disappointed with his tied-26th finish, Pukhraj Gill felt elated to be in the same bracket. Pakistan's Ahmad Baid finished tied-17th.

Final scores: -16 Jeongwoo Ham (Kor) 64-68-68-68; **-14** Cameron John (Aus) 70-67-67-66; **-9** Josele Ballester (ESP) 68-72-69-66, Jazz Janewattananond (Tha) 68-66-73-68, Tomohiro Ishizaka (Jap) 67-68-70-70; **Indian scores: -4 (T26th)** Gaganjeet Bhullar 67-68-72-73, Pukhraj Gill 71-70-72-67; **+11 (70)** Karandeep Kochhar 71-71-77-76.

(The writer is in Singapore at the invitation of the International Series)

Kothari, Advani advance

Veteran cueist Martin Goodwill of England stunned reigning champion Sourav Kothari in the final Group 'A' league match of the IBSF World Billiards Championship in Carlow, Ireland on Sunday. Goodwill registered a 276-275 win. Despite the defeat, Kothari made the pre-quarterfinals with two wins from three matches.

WORLD BILLIARDS

Meanwhile, Pankaj Advani, looking to regain the title, topped Group 'B' with a clean slate. Other Indians in the last-16 stage were **Dhruv Sitwala**, Alok Kumar, Rupesh Shah, Shrikrishna S, Siddharth Parikh and Rafath Habib.

Results (Indians unless mentioned):
Group A: Martin Goodwill (Eng) 276 (62, 66) bt Sourav Kothari 275 (81, 57); Kothari 825 (515, 212, 66) bt Akhilesh Mohan (Fra) 40; **Group B:** Pankaj Advani 785 (162, 88, 389, 56, 60) bt Baek Minhu (Kor) 161 (51); Advani 902 (85, 55, 60, 74, 100, 131, 53, 83, 93, 54, 50) bt Mark Hill (Eng) 78; **Group C:** Dhruv Sitwala 621 (203, 90, 133) bt Aonghus McAnally (Ire) 169; Alok Kumar 522 (69, 54) bt Carl-Walter Steiner (Aut) 184; **Group D:** Rafath Habib 399 (62) bt Ciaran Doyle (Ire) 95; David Causier (Eng) 1049 (542, 101, 130, 131) bt Subrat Das 149; **Group E:** Rupesh Shah 518 (71, 85, 96) bt Peter Tankard (Aus) 211; Robert Hall (Eng) 329 (53, 57, 59, 82) bt Rishabh Thakkar 250 (77); **Group F:** Shrikrishna S 552 (137, 84) bt Joe Doheny (Ire) 202; Peter Sheehan (Eng) 833 (152, 223, 291, 62) bt Jagadesh Bhuvaneswaran 171 (61); **Group G:** Dhvaj Haria 790 (92, 107, 103, 370) bt Aidan Murray (Ire) 109; Haria 830 (225, 51, 57, 96, 120, 175) bt Srinu Katipogu 98; Mike Russell (Eng) 440 (121, 52, 128) bt Katipogu 189 (60); **Group H:** Siddharth Parikh 347 (78) bt Wayne Doyle (Ire) 275 (85, 70); Parikh 517 (92, 63, 93, 75) bt Chenji Ratnavel (IOM) 155. TNN

Karnataka's Nagini claims gold

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Tumakuru: Karnataka's Nagini clinched gold in the women's 800m event on the third and final day of the National Junior (U-20) Athletics Federation competition here on Sunday.

Nagini came home in 2:12.06s, while Vanshika from Uttar Pradesh, with a timing of 2:13.30s, settled for silver. The bronze medal went to Geetika Dahiya, who completed the race in 2:13.49s.

NATIONALS

Apurva Anand Naik, also from Karnataka, bagged silver in the 400m hurdles event; her statemates Nikhil C (men's 3000m steeplechase) and Bhavya CJ (women's javelin throw) won a bronze each.

FINE SHOW: Nagini

ABHAY SETS NEW MARK

Abhay Singh of Reliance claimed the top place in the men's 200m with a record time of 20.82s. He erased the national junior record of 21.02s, which was set by N Srinivas in 2021.

Andhra Pradesh athlete Mogali Venkatram bettered the meet record in the men's 800m, clocking 1:49.02. He eclipsed the previous mark of 1:49.59 recorded by Pradeep Kumar four years ago.

Results (Winners & K'taka only): Men: 3000m: 1. Sourabh Rawat (Utk) 8:25.63; **High Jump:** 1. Basant (Navy) 2.21m; **Discus Throw:** 1. Nishchay (Har) 57.02; **400m Hurdles:** 1. Jashanpreet Singh (Pun) 51.80; **800m:** 1. Mogali Venkatram (AP) 1:49.02; **200m:** 1. Abhay Singh (Rel) 20.82; **Triple Jump:** 1. Royshan P (TN) 15.75m; **Javelin Throw:** 1. Rohan Yadav (NCOE Pat) 73.37m; **3000m Steeplechase:** 1. Sumit Rathee (Har) 9:28.04; 3. Nikhil C (Kar) 9:35.25. **Women: 3000m:** 1. Sakshi Bhandari (Mah) 9:45.43; **Hammer Throw**: Nandini (UP) 58.78m; **Triple Jump:** Sadhana Ravi (TN) 12.97m; **400m Hurdles**: 1. Tanu Chaudhary (UP) 59.38, 2. Apurva Anand Naik (Kar) 1:01.42; **800m:** 1. Nagini (Kar) 2:12.06; **High Jump**: 1. Pooja (Har) 1.80m; **Javelin Throw**: 1. Poonam (JWS) 51.64m, 3. Bhavya CJ (Kar) 47.23; **Heptathlon**: 1. Jaskiran Kaur (Utk) 4367pts; **200m**: 1. Bhoomika Nehate (Mah) 24.21; **3000m Steeplechase**: 1. Mansi Yadav (Mah) 11:10.59.

Sinner motors on

Jannik Sinner continued his quest to become the first man in history to win five Masters 1000 tournaments in a row with a smooth 6-2, 6-3 victory over Danish qualifier Elmer Moller at the Madrid Open on Sunday. Another Italian, Lorenzo Musetti overcame Dutch 29th seed Tallon Griekspoor 6-4, 7-5.

TENNIS

The sixth-seeded Musetti will face Czech 11th seed Jiri Lehecka for a spot in the quarterfinals.

Earlier in the day, Coco Gauff became the latest victim of the stomach virus that has been sweeping through the draw in Madrid but the ailing American still found a way to beat Sorana Cirstea 4-6, 7-5, 6-1 and reach the round of 16. AFP

DEVYANSH STARS FOR B'LORE SPORTING

Bengaluru: Bangalore Sporting scored a comfortable 63-38 win against IBBC in the boys section at the State sub junior (U-13) championship for the BS Narayan memorial trophy here on Sunday. Devyansh starred with 20 points, while Bhavish chipped in with 13 for the winning team.

In the girls category, Southern Blues scored a narrow 22-20 victory over Orions, who were trailing 6-14 at the interval. Orions' clawed back in the second half, but the Blues held their nerve to eke out a two-point win.

Results: Boys: Bangalore Sporting 63 (Devyansh 20, Bhavish 13) bt IBBC 38 (Shivansh 15 Parthav 7) HT: 32-13; PPC 73 (Narrun Amar 29, Daiwik 21) bt Hebbal 9

BASKETBALL

(Atharv 3) HT: 39-4; YNBC 77 (Daiwik 21, Showrya 15) bt CJC 41 (Ashith 15, Vedika 15) HT: 33-18; Koramangala 62 (Takshin 12, Mani 10) bt DRDO 16 (Sravan 9, Rishit 6) HT: 40-10; Young Orions 48 (Avyukth 24) bt Devanga 22 (Naithan 11) HT: 19-10; Appaiah BC 24 (Nelson 12, Evan 8) bt Orions 23 (Sourav 8, Charith 6) HT: 16-17; HBR BC 52 (Rehaan 7, Nehal 6) bt BCYA 16 (Rohan 6, Kushal 4) HT: 36-7; Bharath SU 36 (Shishir 12, Hitesh 8) bt VNSC 16 (Pranav 5) HT: 25-5; Viveks 37 (Prerit 10, Kiyansh 9) bt Ymma 27 (Aarav 18) HT: 18-8. **Girls:** Lakshyan 32 (Shivali 6, Ahaana 6) bt DRDO 9 (Dhatri 3) HT: 10-5; Vimanapura 25 (Barkha 15) MNK Rao 18 (Manvi 11) HT: 10-10; Southern Blues 22 (Meghna 8, Anyika 6) bt Orions 20 (Vaishnavi 10, Anargya 8) HT: 14-6; Nettakallappa 23 (Shreyagana 14, Mahatee 8) bt Hoskote 13 (Jiya 9) HT: 13-7; JSC 32 (Sanvitha 13, Adithi 12) bt Pattabhi 4 (Kavya 2) HT: 15-4; PPC 36 (Harshitha 12, Vedasiri 10) bt VNSC 5 (Ridhi 3) HT: 15-1; BYCA 61 (Sanchita 16) bt Koramangala 8 (Sujana 4) HT: 31-04. TNN

MSRIT TEAMS EMERGE CHAMPIONS

MS Ramaiah Institute of Technology (MSRIT) clinched both the men's and women's titles in the state-level inter-collegiate basketball championships in Bengaluru on Saturday. In the men's final, MSRIT defeated RV College of Engineering 62-40, with Adarsh leading the scoring charts with 20 points. In the women's final, Ramaiah overcame Nitte Meenakshi Institute of Technology 56-40 to seal the crown.

Results: Finals: Men: Ramaiah 62 (Adarsh 20, Kanishka 16, Pranesh 10) bt RVCE 40 (Harshil 10, Rohan 14); **Women:** Ramaiah 56 (Aadhya Aital 30, Nakshatra 12) bt NMIT 40 (Sanjana 20). **Most valuable players: Men:** Adarsh Alwa; **Women:** Aadhya Aital.

CITY ROUND-UP

Young Blues Elite FC wear crown: Young Blues Elite FC emerged champions of the KSFA Women's 'A' Division League football championship in Bengaluru on Sunday. YBEFC and runners-up Parikrma FC were promoted to the Karnataka Women's League. On the other hand, GRK Girls FC and Off Side Trap FC were relegated to 'B' Division.

Results: Young Blues Elite FC 5 (Nilavoli Sethurayar 4, Shravy Manoj 6, 31, Lakshita Vinay Nair 34, Dhanusree Arun Chanayil 70) bt TFF 0; Kemp Juniors FC 2 (Pragya Kumari Thakur 18, Diya Krishnamurthy 58) bt SRC 0; Reds United FC 3 (Anisha Vivek Itengar 16, Charvi A 67, 68) bt Pass FC Sparks 0.
Individual awards: Best goalkeeper: Ketaki Gulhane (YBEFC); **Best defender:** Judith Jhon (Parikrma FC); **Best midfielder:** Nilavoli Sethurayar (YBEFC); **Top scorer**: Arti Munda (9 goals; Parikrma FC). TNN

This newspaper is published by Manjeet Singh Dhami from Bennett Coleman & Co Ltd., Elixir Chancery Building, 1st, 2nd and 4th Floor, 135, Residency Road, Shanthala Nagar, Bengaluru – 560025 (Phones: Office: EPABX - 080- 42209000, Editorial: 080-46787878) on behalf of Bennett Coleman & Co Ltd., edited by Neelam Raaj and printed by Sekar S at Bennett Coleman & Co Ltd., The Times of India Press, No. 9/10/11-A, 4th Main, KIADB Bommasandra Industrial Area, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore - 560 099 (Ph: 080-22894999). Regd office: Dr. D.N. Road, Mumbai - 400 001. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited.
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